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PROPHECY AND THE PROPHETS

In Their Historical Relations

By

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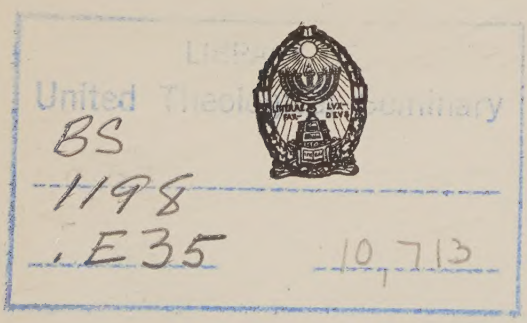
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CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
	Preface	5
I.	Introductory. The Old Testament a Library of Books	9
II.	The Nature and Development of Hebrew Prophecy	18
III.	Amos	35
IV.	Hosea	52
V.	Isaiah	73
VI.	Micah	116
VII.	Jeremiah	125
VIII.	The Contemporaries of Jeremiah	163
IX.	Ezekiel	186
X.	Isaiah, Chapters Forty to Sixty-six	222
XI.	Haggai and Zechariah	246
XII.	Malachi	272
XIII.	Joel	286
XIV.	Jonah and Daniel	293
	Review Questions	314
	Index	329

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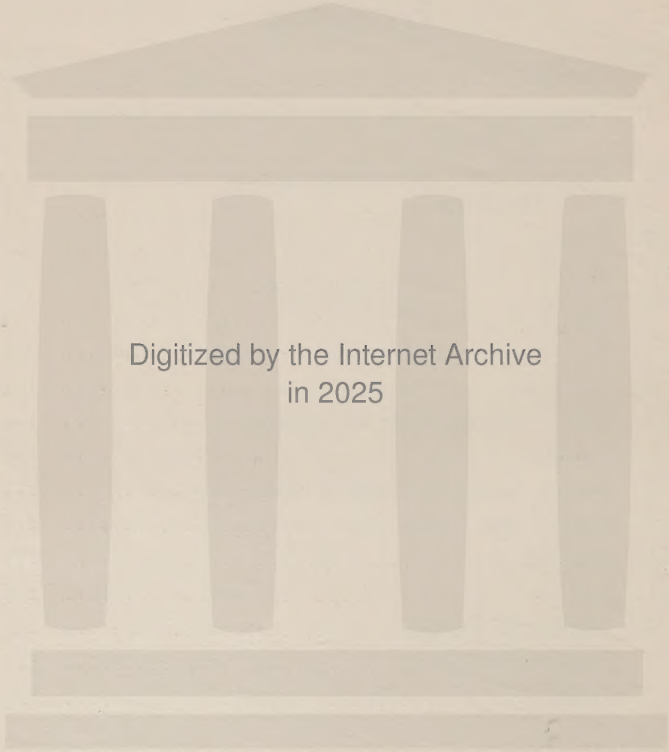
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PREFACE

THE past few years have seen a revival of interest in the study of the Scriptures. The unique place occupied by the Bible as a means of grace throughout the entire history of the Christian Church has again come to be recognized, and great numbers of old and young have taken up its earnest, devout, and systematic study. This study is by no means confined to the New Testament, for Christians are learning more and more that, while they find their loftiest inspiration in the study of the life, the character, and the teaching of the Master and of his disciples, the Old Testament has not been displaced by the New. The early Christians were right in placing the Old Testament by the side of the New, because the former is of inestimable value, and the earnest student soon finds that every part of the book is full of teaching that is of practical value even in the twentieth century A. D.

In this age, when the responsibility of the individual Christian and of the Christian Church toward the practical, social, religious, and moral problems and evils is recognized more than at any previous time, the prophetic literature is worthy of the most careful study on the part of all Christians who recognize their obligations to their day and generation and are willing to meet them. The prophets of old met in the strength of God, and at the divine impulse, the problems and evils of their day and genera-

tion. They had to face the problems arising from the spirit of materialism and commercialism, the evils resulting from the accumulation of wealth, power, and resources in the hands of a few, the cruelty and arrogance of the rich proprietors, and corruption both in government and in the administration of justice. They had to grapple with a cold, heartless formalism, that threatened to destroy pure, spiritual religion. Against these and similar evils and wrongs the prophets of old raised their hands and voices. The truths proclaimed then are the truths needed to-day. Surely it is a part of our duty as Christians, as American citizens, to do our share toward a Christian solution of the social and religious problems of our age. We can hardly claim to have reached the full stature of Christian manhood and womanhood until we have acquired the knowledge and power to cope with these difficulties in the spirit of the Master and with the methods best adapted to the Christianizing of modern society. In these our efforts to lift humanity nearer to God we may learn much from the prophets of old.

The book now sent forth is intended to be an aid toward a better appreciation of the prophetic books and the prophetic teaching. Its study is in no sense to take the place of a study of the biblical books themselves; it is rather to serve as an introduction to these books and a guide to lead to the more important truths taught by the prophets. In preparing the book the author has had in mind especially adult Bible classes in the Sunday school or young people's organizations. However, it may be useful also as a basis of study in college and seminary classes studying the Old Testament in English, and to individual readers and

students who desire to acquire a knowledge of the permanent lessons taught in the prophetic books.

At the close of the book the author has added numerous Review Questions covering each chapter, which, he trusts, may be of assistance to teachers and students. At first he planned to suggest also topics for further investigation, but he desisted, thinking that it would be more profitable to concentrate the study upon the topics covered in the text and such special investigations as might naturally arise from the discussion in class.

It is not possible to discuss in one small volume all the questions, critical or otherwise, which present themselves to the student of Hebrew prophecy. Therefore, for the benefit of any, especially of the leaders of Bible classes, who may desire to pursue a more exhaustive study of the prophetic writings, the following are suggested as books adapted to the needs of students of the English Bible:

L. W. Batten, The Hebrew Prophet. The Macmillan Co., New York, 1905.

A. F. Kirkpatrick, The Doctrine of the Prophets. Macmillan & Co., London, 1897.

C. F. Kent, The Kings and Prophets of Israel and Judah (Historical Bible, III). Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1909.

John Skinner, The Book of the Prophet Isaiah (Cambridge Bible). 2 vols. The University Press, Cambridge, 1900.

O. C. Whitehouse, Isaiah (New Century Bible). 2 vols. Henry Frowde, New York, 1905.

G. A. Smith, The Book of Isaiah (Expositor's Bible). 2 vols. A. C. Armstrong & Son, New York, 1890.

S. R. Driver, The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1906.

C. R. Brown, The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah. American Baptist Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1907.
A. B. Davidson, The Book of Ezekiel (Cambridge Bible). The University Press, Cambridge, 1893.
W. F. Lofthouse, Ezekiel (New Century Bible). Henry Frowde, New York.
S. R. Driver, The Book of Daniel (Cambridge Bible). The University Press, Cambridge, 1900.
C. M. Cobern, Ezekiel and Daniel (Whedon Commentary). Eaton & Mains, New York, 1901.
F. C. Eiselen, The Minor Prophets (Whedon Commentary). Eaton & Mains, New York, 1907.
S. R. Driver and R. F. Horton, The Minor Prophets (New Century Bible). 2 vols. Henry Frowde, New York, 1906.
G. A. Smith, The Book of the Twelve Prophets (Expositor's Bible). 2 vols. A. C. Armstrong & Son, New York, 1896–98.

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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTORY

THE OLD TESTAMENT A LIBRARY OF BOOKS

CONTENTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

What is the Bible? The Bible may be described as a collection of books written during a period of more than a thousand years, in which men moved by the Divine Spirit have recorded and preserved their conceptions and interpretations of God's revelations of himself, his will and redemptive purpose for the human race. The word *Bible* is derived from the Greek. It is the plural of a noun *biblion*, which means *little book*. In the Latin this plural came to be regarded as a singular, *biblia*, meaning book. This singular noun was early adopted into the language of the Western Church, and it is used as such even now in the languages of modern Europe. But the Bible can never be rightly appreciated unless it is borne in mind that it is not so much one book as a library consisting of many books. Altogether there are sixty-six separate writings in the collection as found in the English translations with which we are most familiar. Of these, twenty-seven belong to the New Testament, the remaining thirty-nine to the Old Testament.

The Books contained in the English Old Testament. The Old Testament is that portion of the Bible which originated, in the manner suggested, among the Hebrews during the period preceding the perfect revelation

of God in Jesus the Christ, and which was taken over from the Jews by the Christians. The thirty-nine books are usually grouped as follows:

I.	*Law:* Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy	5 books
II.	*History:* Joshua, Judges, Ruth, First and Second Samuel, First and Second Kings, First and Second Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther	12 books
III.	*Poetry:* Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs	5 books
IV.	*Prophecy:* (1) The Major Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel	5 books
	(2) The Minor Prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi	12 books
	Total	39 books

Differences between the English and Hebrew Old Testaments. With the exception of a few portions which are in Aramaic these books were written originally in the Hebrew language, from which the modern English translations have been made. But when compared with the Hebrew Bible the English Old Testament is found to show differences in the arrangement and the total number of books. In these two points, as also in the names of the books, the English Bible follows the Latin translation of Jerome, called *Vulgate*, which served as the basis of the early English translations. The Vulgate, in turn, is dependent in these things upon the early Greek translation called *Septuagint*, made from the Hebrew during the last three pre-Christian centuries.

Contents of the Hebrew Old Testament. The He-

brew Bible contains all the books enumerated above, but as a result of various combinations the total number is much smaller. The common editions contain twenty-four books; some ancient traditions speak of twenty-two, which is the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet; others, of twenty-seven. The twenty-four books are arranged in three divisions:

I.	*Law:* Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy (the names given here are those found in the English Bible, not those given to the books by the Jews).....	5 books
II.	*Prophets:* (1) The former prophets, or, the first volume of prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings.....	4 books
	(2) The latter prophets, or, the second volume of prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, The Twelve (Minor Prophets).....	4 books
III.	*Writings:* Commonly called *Hagiographa*, that is, Sacred Writings: Ruth, Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Lamentations, Daniel, Esther, Ezra, Chronicles.....	11 books
	Total.....	24 books

Growth of the Old Testament Canon. The three divisions mark, in all probability, three stages in the formation of the Old Testament canon. At first the *Law* was canonized, during the closing years of the fifth century B. C., then the *Prophets*, between about 250 and 200 B. C., and finally the *Writings*, before the opening of the Christian era.

DIFFERENT KINDS OF LITERATURE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

"In Divers Portions." The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says that during the Old Testament dis-

pensation God spake "in divers portions and in divers manners." The former expression means that the revelations recorded in the Old Testament were not given at one time, through one channel, or by one man, but at many times, through many channels, and by many men, scattered over a period of many centuries, in places hundreds of miles apart. One result of this is seen in the fact that the Old Testament contains many books written by many different authors in different periods of Hebrew history.

"In Divers Manners." The expression "in divers manners" touches upon the different kinds of literature found in the Old Testament, but it goes deeper than mere literary form. It means that, in giving revelations of himself during the Old Testament period, God used various methods and means; the different kinds of literature being simply the outgrowth of the various modes of revelation. It is a universal Christian belief that God reveals himself to-day in divers manners and modes. Every Christian believes, for example, that God reveals himself in the events of history, be it the history of individuals or of nations. Sometimes the voice may be almost inaudible, at other times it sounds like the roar of thunder. Again, to many devout persons, God speaks very distinctly through the outward acts of worship. To thousands of earnest and sincere Christians connected with churches using an elaborate ritual this ritual is not mere form, it is a means of blessing and grace through which God reveals himself to their souls. Moreover, God selects certain persons, especially well qualified to hear his voice; these he commissions as ambassadors to declare him and his will to the people. The belief in this method of revela-

tion is the philosophical basis for the offices of the Christian preacher and Christian religious teacher. The difference between the two is that the former appeals primarily to the conscience, the latter to the intellect, and then by way of the intellect to the conscience. Once more, in his attempt to reach the human heart God may dispense with all external means; he may and does reveal himself by working directly upon the mind and spirit of the individual.

God's Revelations during the Old Testament Period. These are some of the "manners" in which God reveals himself to his children to-day, and these are some of the means and manners in which God made himself known during the Old Testament dispensation. Then, as now, he revealed himself in nature, in the events of history, in the ritual, and by direct impressions; then, as now, he selected certain individuals to whom he might make himself known in all these various ways, and who could transmit the revelations to others. The Old Testament contains records and interpretations of these manifold revelations.

The Human Agents who Assisted God during the Old Testament Period. We are informed by the book itself who were the principal agents to mediate, interpret, or record the revelations granted to the chosen people or to individuals during the period preceding the fullness of time when God might grant a revelation, complete and universal, in and through his Son. In Jer. 18. 18, part of which reads, "For the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet," three of these agents are mentioned, the prophets, the priests, and the wise men. To these should be added the sweet singers, the psalmists

of Israel. These four classes of agents observed the various manifestations of God, interpreted them, and recorded them in various kinds of literature.

(1) **The Prophetic Literature.** The most important part of Old Testament literature is due to prophetic activity. The prophets, pure in character, strong in intellect, sincere in purpose, quickened through personal communion with God, enlightened by the Divine Spirit, were able to see facts and understand truths hidden from the eyes of those who did not live in the same intimate fellowship with Jehovah. These men, possessed of divine ideals of righteousness, and eager to realize those ideals in their nation, became statesmen, social reformers, and religious and ethical teachers. They, with flaming enthusiasm, sought to impress the truths burned by a Divine Spirit upon their hearts and minds upon their less enlightened contemporaries.

With the gradual advance in culture, reading and writing became quite universal; then the prophets, anxious to appeal to a larger circle and to preserve their messages for more willing ears, put their utterances in writing, and to this new departure we owe the sublime specimens of prophetic literature in the Old Testament.

(2) **The Wisdom Literature.** As the prophets resemble the modern preacher, so the wise men resemble the modern religious teacher. Both classes of ancient workers consisted of men who were qualified to understand the divine will and purpose and to make it known to others. But the wise men did not appeal directly to the conscience as did the prophets, but rather to the mind through counsel and argument, though their ultimate aim was to reach the conscience and through it influence conduct and life. The prophet

ordinarily supported his exhortation by appeal to the divine authority. He would have said to the indolent man, "Thus saith Jehovah, Go to work, thou sluggard." Not so the wise man In a simple manner he appealed to the ordinary commor. sense, trusting that in this wise he would make an impression the effects of which would be seen in transformed conduct. The following verses (Prov. 24. 30–34) may serve as an illustration:

I went by the field of the sluggard,
And by the vineyard of the man void of understanding;
And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns,
The face thereof was covered with nettles,
And the stone wall thereof was broken down.
Then I beheld, and considered well;
I saw, and received instruction:
Yet a little sleep, a little slumber,
A little folding of the hands to sleep;
So shall thy poverty come as a robber,
And thy want as an armed man.

Nothing escaped the observation of these men; and from beginning to end they emphasized the important truth that religion and the daily life are inseparable. From the giving of simple practical precepts they rose to speculation, and the Books of Job and Ecclesiastes bear witness to the fact that the problems they attempted to solve were no mean problems.

(3) **The Devotional Literature.** Of profound significance is also the devotional literature of the Old Testament, as illustrated, for example, in the Psalter, which is characterized most fittingly in the words of Johannes Arndt, "What the heart is in man, that is the Psalter in the Bible." The devotional literature embodies the expressions of devout souls, prophets, priests, wise

men, kings, and peasants, who came into the very presence of God, held communion with him, and were privileged to hear the sweet sound of his voice.

(4) **The Priestly Literature.** The priests constitute another important class of religious workers in ancient Israel. During the earliest period their principal duty appears to have been the giving of oracle or law, but in time the care of the sanctuary with all that was involved in this passed into their hands, and during the greater part of the national life of the Hebrews their chief functions were the care of the sanctuary and the performance of the ceremonial rites; yet during all this time they remained the custodians of the sacred law and custom. For centuries these laws and customs were probably transmitted by word of mouth, or were only partially committed to writing; but at last there came a time when convenience and existing conditions demanded that they be codified and put into writing; and naturally the priests, the guardians of sacred law and custom, were called upon to perform this task. To this class of religious workers, then, we may trace the legal and ceremonial literature. In it they sought to interpret the divine revelations given by means of precept, commandment, and the object lessons of the ritual and ceremonial.

(5) **The Historical Literature Due to Prophetic Activity.** The historical literature of the Old Testament furnishes an interpretation of the movements of God in history. The prophet was a preacher of righteousness to his day and generation, but his activity was not confined to the present. He was the ambassador of Jehovah to make known his will concerning the past, the present, or the future. Addressing himself

to the present he spoke as a preacher; when the message concerned the future it took the form of prediction. The case might arise, however, that the people failed to understand the significance of their own past history, and thus failed to receive the proper conception of their God and his will. If the lesson was not to be lost some one must serve as an interpreter, and who would be better qualified to give the right interpretation than the prophet? Sometimes he embodied such interpretations in his discourses, but on a larger scale this demand made of him an historian, not for the purpose of merely recording events, but of interpreting them at the same time. To these prophet-historians we owe a large portion of the historical literature.

The Historical Literature Due to Priestly Activity. But not all Old Testament history comes from the prophets. As already indicated, the legal and ceremonial literature may be traced to priestly activity. Now, in connection with the recording of the laws, customs, institutions, and ceremonial requirements, the origin of these laws and institutions became a matter of interest and importance. This interest and the demand for information arising from it led the priests also to become historians; and to these priestly writers we are indebted for not a small part of sacred history.

CHAPTER II

THE NATURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF HEBREW PROPHECY

Hebrew prophecy has a history. There were a period of obscure beginnings, a period of growth and lofty achievement, and a period of decline and expiration, when other agencies took the place of living prophecy.

THE BASIS OF HEBREW PROPHECY

Man a Religious Being. Prophecy is not peculiar to the Hebrews. A phenomenon to which the general term "prophecy" may be given existed among all nations of antiquity, and is found to-day even among very primitive peoples. The ultimate basis of prophecy is to be found in the religious nature of man, which causes him to reach out toward some kind of a divine being. Men everywhere and in all ages have given evidence of the possession of certain religious beliefs or feelings more or less clearly defined, which would inevitably lead to the institution of some sort of prophetic order among them.

Universal Religious Beliefs Underlying the Phenomenon of Prophecy. 1. Man is surrounded by mysterious divine powers. In the course of time these various powers may come to be regarded as the manifestations of one single power, which may or may not be conceived as possessing the attributes of personality. 2. This power, or these powers, determine the well-being and destiny of men. 3. If this is true, it becomes

a matter of vital concern that men secure the good will and favor of these deities; but in order to do this men must know the divine will and purpose; this in turn makes it necessary for the deities in some way to make known their purpose and will. As a result we find everywhere a belief that the divine power, or powers, seek to communicate their will to men. 4. Alongside of this is found the belief that the deity does not give his communications indiscriminately; he reveals himself to certain peculiarly qualified individuals, who might transmit the revelations to the people in general. These favorite persons occupy much the same place among other nations as do the prophets among the Hebrews. Whenever it became desirable to know the will of the deity, men would go to these specially favored persons for counsel, either to have them determine the divine will or to have them interpret the meaning of some phenomenon or happening which the inquirer had experienced, and which he thought contained a message from the deity.

Primitive Methods of Determining the Will of the Deity. The question arises here, how were these "prophets" thought to discover the will of their deity or deities? Generally speaking, in two ways: 1. The external method; 2. The internal method. In the external method two phases may be distinguished: (1) Passive observation of external phenomena; (2) The use of definite means to discover the divine will.

Passive Observation of External Phenomena. In this case the prophet put forth no special effort to determine the will of the deity; he simply observed passively certain phenomena, as, for example, the flight or cry of the birds, the movements of the clouds, the

conjunction of the stars, the formation of the members of sacrificial animals, the convulsive movements of the liver or entrails, the rustling of the leaves, and many more. Thousands of tablets have been unearthed in the ruins of the library of King Ashurbanapal of Assyria, which contain interpretations of this kind. As an illustration of their character, a few lines may be quoted:

> If a woman gives birth to a child with the right ear missing, the days of the ruler will be long;
> If a woman gives birth to a child with the left ear missing, distress will enter the land and weaken it.

This method is also reflected in 2 Sam. 5. 24: "And it shall be, when thou hearest the sound of marching in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself; for then is Jehovah gone out before thee to smite the host of the Philistines." The rustling of the mulberry leaves was thought to indicate the will of Jehovah.

Various Efforts to Determine the Will of the Deity. There were cases, however, when passive observation was thought insufficient; when it was considered necessary to put forth definite efforts for the purpose of determining the will of the deity. The Old Testament contains serveral references to this method of procedure. The cup of divination (Gen. 44. 5, 15) must have been used in this connection. The most common method, however, seems to have been the casting of the lot, ordinarily in the form of headless arrows or rods. The question was put in a form which made possible the simple answer "yes" or "no," "this" or "that." The casting of the lot in the case of Jonah is an illustration of

this method, as also in the case of the election of a successor to Judas. Ezek. 21. 21, 22 describes the use of the same method: "For the king of Babylon stood at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use divination: he shook the arrows to and fro, he consulted the teraphim, he looked in the liver. In his right hand was the divination for Jerusalem, to set battering-rams, to open the mouth in the slaughter, to lift up the voice with shouting, to set battering-rams against the gates, to cast up mounds, to build forts." It is seen that in some passages the Old Testament favors the use of these primitive methods; on the other hand, there are passages which condemn their use very emphatically, for example, Lev. 19. 26; Num. 23. 23; 24. 1.

The Internal Method of Revelation. By the side of these external methods of divine revelation there was known and practiced the internal method. The deity was thought in some way to possess the individual, to inspire him, to speak through him. The most illustrious example of this in antiquity is the oracle of Apollo at Delphi. Here the mediary between Apollo and the people was a woman, called Pythia. The procedure was as follows: "Having prepared herself by washing and purification, the Pythia entered the sanctuary, with gold ornaments in her hair, and flowing robes upon her; she drank of the water of the fountain Cassotis, which flowed into the shrine, tasted the fruit of the old bay tree standing in the chamber, and took her seat. No one was present but a priest, called the *prophētēs*, who explained the words she uttered in her ecstasy, and put them into metrical form, generally hexameters." It should be noted that in this con-

nection the term "prophet" was applied not to the one who was thought to receive the message from the deity, but to the man who delivered it to the people.

Differences between Hebrew Prophecy and Prophecy Outside of Israel. In this belief that the deity possessed and spoke through an individual we find the connecting link between "prophecy" outside of Israel and prophecy among the Hebrews. But, while there is agreement in form, neither can be estimated properly if we fail to note the marked differences between the two. The chief of these are: 1. The nature and character of the deity in whose name the oracle was given. If the God of the Hebrews is the one true God, surely a message delivered in his name is not in the same class with one given in the name of a deity that has no real existence. 2. Another distinguishing mark is the character of the truth or truths proclaimed. The utterances of the Hebrew prophets are permeated by a spirit absent from the oracles of other nations and religions. 3. Another important fact which must not be overlooked is the more complete loss of self-consciousness on the part of the non-Israelitish prophets; indeed, during the golden age of Hebrew prophecy, references to a state of ecstasy are hardly ever found; there was full recognition of conscious, personal intercourse between Jehovah and his prophets.

THE NATURE OF HEBREW PROPHECY

Meaning of the Term "Prophet." Etymology does not aid us in determining the conception implied in the Hebrew noun translated *prophet;* for the root meaning of the word is doubtful. However, it is not improba-

ble that it is connected with a verb found in Arabic in the sense of *bring forward* or *announce*. Whether it is or not, one thing is certain, that in itself it does not imply the idea of prediction. While the study of etymology may fail to lead to certain results, a consideration of usage may prove more satisfactory. Exod. 7. 1, reads, "And Jehovah said unto Moses, See, I have made thee as God to Pharaoh; and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet"; and Exod. 4. 16, "And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people; and it shall come to pass, that he shall be to thee a mouth, and thou shalt be to him as God." These two verses suggest that the prophet was looked upon as a man who spoke for or in the name of some one, especially in the name of the deity. In other words, the Hebrew prophet was an ambassador sent to make known the will and purpose of Jehovah to the chosen people (Amos 3. 7, 8). As such he spoke for God, and was, therefore, more a forthteller than a foreteller. And yet prediction is not excluded; for God might desire to make known his will with reference to the past, the present, or the future; in the last case the utterance of the prophet must take the form of prediction.

Names Given to the Prophets in the Old Testament. That the contemporaries of the prophets believed them to sustain a peculiarly close relation to God is shown by the names which they gave to them. The name *the man of God* (1 Sam. 9. 6; 1 Kings 12. 22; Jer. 35. 4) occurs quite frequently; another common title is *the servant of God* or *of Jehovah* (2 Kings 9. 7; 1 Kings 14. 18; 18. 36), which implies that the prophets were commissioned to carry out the divine purpose. Once, at least, is found the title *the interpreter* (Isa. 43. 27). As

suggested in another connection, God speaks in the events of history, and one duty of the prophets is to interpret the significance of these events to their contemporaries.

Comprehensiveness of the Prophetic Interest. If the interest of God extends to all affairs of life, it follows inevitably that the activity of his representatives should be very comprehensive, and as a matter of fact we find that the prophets feel constrained to interfere in every sphere of life and demand the performance of the will of God everywhere. Since, during the early period, the individual was almost completely lost sight of, while the nation was supreme, it is not strange that in the beginning, at least, the prophets' teaching should center around the nation rather than around the individual. They represented Jehovah before the nation, and they sought with all their energies to make Israel in very truth the people of God. Broadly speaking, we may say that the prophets pursued national and religious ends; they believed in the national life of Israel and fostered it, but they believed still more in the religion of Jehovah, and if at any time the national interests came in conflict with the religious interests, the prophets stood for the latter, though it might involve the destruction of the nation. This twofold interest of the prophets may be seen from the time of Moses on; and by it they are distinguished from the seers who are mentioned in the early history of Israel, but who ministered rather to personal, private, and temporal wants. It would seem that Samuel combined the two offices and marked in a sense the transition from the lower to the higher, though even before his day prophets of Jehovah had appeared.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF HEBREW PROPHECY

The Exodus the Beginning of Hebrew History. Israel had no national existence until after the exodus from Egypt, hence in this study the period before the conquest may be left out of consideration. True, there may have been men with prophetic vision and experience, but the circumstances were not adapted to a prophetic work such as was done by the men whom we are accustomed to call prophets. Their activity presupposed an organization such as was first instituted at the time of the Exodus.

Moses the First Great Prophet. The first great Hebrew prophet was Moses. We are accustomed to think of him as a lawgiver and author, but his chief glory is rather that he was the first and greatest prophet of the Old Testament dispensation. Moses did two things: 1. He organized the heterogeneous elements into a national unity. 2. He gave to this unity a practical monotheism. In this we see the twofold activity which is common to all the prophets, national and religious, with the emphasis upon the latter, for the basis of the national union was the recognition of Jehovah as the one God of Israel. Certainly in the beginning Moses had to do some things which at a later time were assigned to separate officials. In reality, Moses filled a fourfold office, though he was first of all a prophet: (1) He was a prophet, (2) a priest, (3) a lawgiver, (4) a political leader. As such he laid the foundations for the political, social, and religious life of the Hebrews.

Prophecy During the Period of the Judges. The records of the period of the Judges mention only two persons as occupying the prophetic office, Deborah,

the prophetess (Judg. 4. 4), and an unnamed prophet (Judg. 6. 8). Both deserve to be called by the name. Deborah was the leader in a great movement for national independence, and the national movement had its basis in a religious revival; the people were urged to come "to the help of Jehovah against the mighty." The unnamed prophet also connected national disaster with apostasy, and therefore, by implication, national prosperity with loyalty to Jehovah.

Samuel and the Sons of the Prophets. In the days of Samuel men called prophets appeared in great numbers. During the wars of conquest religion was lost sight of again and again; but the religious leaders and a minority of the people always recognized that victory could be theirs only if they were united, and they knew that the only efficient bond of unity was the common faith in Jehovah. When the continued successes of the Philistines threatened the national life of the Hebrews, there arose a group of religious enthusiasts, who preached the almost forgotten truth that Jehovah was the God of Israel, and in his name they proclaimed a holy war against the Philistines. Without leadership these "sons of the prophets" could not have accomplished anything, but under the direction of Samuel they must have played an important role during the Philistine crisis, which led to the establishment of the monarchy. At the command of God and through the cooperation of the prophets Saul became king, and at first the prophetic influence of Samuel continued, but in time Saul, whose lot was cast with the political and military party rather than with the representatives of Jehovah, gave evidence that he was unwilling to abide by the policy of the religious party. Samuel considered

this a serious religious danger, and David, "a man after God's own heart," who might be expected to follow the prophetic leading, was anointed king.

Prophecy During the Reigns of David and Solomon. During the next few generations the prophets appear upon the scene but rarely; but whenever we get a glimpse of them they show themselves worthy successors of Moses, Deborah, and Samuel, and worthy predecessors of Elijah, Amos, Isaiah, and the rest. Nathan boldly denounces David (2 Sam. 12. 1ff.); Gad also delivers a message affecting vitally king and people (2 Sam. 24. 11ff.); Nathan has an important part in the crowning of Solomon (1 Kings 1. 11ff.).

The Prophets and the Division of the Kingdom. The next political event of importance was the division of the kingdom subsequent to the death of Solomon, and again we find the prophets taking an active interest. In accord with their general policy, they favored the division (1 Kings 11. 29ff.; 12. 22ff.), because they were convinced that a continuation of the policy of Solomon would result in the loss of true religion, and they were willing to sacrifice the state, if only the religion of Jehovah could be saved.

The Rise of False Prophecy. The hopes of the prophets were not fully realized, for the kings of the northern kingdom were by no means all ardent worshipers of Jehovah. In name he continued to be the God of Israel, but the conduct of the kings, who found ready imitators among the people, was not such as to allay the fears of the zealous Jehovah prophets. Another danger threatened from the rise of false prophecy. In the course of the centuries the prophetic office grew in influence, and this increase in power became in itself a

danger, for it attracted many recruits who were without the prophetic spirit, and who became prophets simply because the office seemed to assure an easy and comfortable living. These prophets undermined the influence of the true prophets and were responsible to a large extent for the corrupt practices condemned so severely by the later prophets. Two classes of false prophets may be distinguished: On the one hand, the mercenary prophets, who are described by Micah (3. 5) in these words: "The prophets that make my people to err; that bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and whoso putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him." These prophets were following the sentiment, "Whose bread I eat, his song I sing." On the other hand, there were the political prophets, who, unlike the mercenary prophets, may have been sincere, but who lost sight of the religious mission and destiny of the nation, and whose utterances were determined entirely by political ambitions. Both classes were a menace to the religion of Jehovah as understood by the true prophets.

The Reign of Ahab and Jezebel. In the days of Ahab a test was applied to the prophets which temporarily separated the true prophets from the false, and led to a new struggle which ended in the triumph of Jehovah. Omri and Ahab were two of the greatest kings of the northern kingdom. In order to fortify his position the former entered into an alliance with the king of Tyre, and sealed it by the marriage of his son Ahab to Jezebel, the daughter of the king of Tyre. Ahab, an energetic king, was religiously indifferent, and though there is no indication that he himself at any time ceased to worship Jehovah, he showed little

active interest in the God of his people. Jezebel, on the other hand, was a religious zealot, and she soon gained many concessions from the king, which gave a prominent place to her own god Baal. The great mass of the people, seeing the indifference of the king, followed the example of her who represented to them, by her enthusiasm and zeal, the policy of the court; and so did the false prophets, who thought that their interests demanded loyalty to the court. To permit the worship of another deity by the side of Jehovah in Israel was considered treason by the true prophets. Something must be done to save the religion of their God.

The Activity of Elijah and Elisha. The crisis brought forth two great representatives of Jehovah, Elijah and Elisha, who, each in his own way, boldly and fearlessly carried on the struggle, until they finally succeeded in driving the hated worship from Israel and the faithless dynasty from the throne. Once more the nation came to acknowledge Jehovah as its God. Succeeding prophets still found it necessary to counteract the tendency to apostatize from Jehovah, but their chief duty was to set in a clearer light the nature and character of Jehovah, the God of Israel, and his purpose for the nation and mankind. How they did this our study of the separate books will show.

The Hebrew Prophets in Chronological Order. Here it may be sufficient to enumerate the canonical prophets in their chronological order, and to point out briefly the principal theme of each:

I. *The eighth century prophets*, or, the prophets of the Assyrian period.
   1. In Israel: Amos, c. 755; Hosea, c. 750–735.
   2. In Judah: Isaiah, c. 740–700; Micah, c. 735–700.

II. *The seventh century prophets*, or, the prophets of the Chaldean period (all in Judah, since the northern kingdom disappeared in 722).
Jeremiah, c. 626–586; Zephaniah, c. 626; Nahum, c. 608; Habakkuk, c. 600.

III. *The prophets of the exile.*
Ezekiel, 593–570; Obadiah, after 586. The author of Isa. 40ff. speaks from the historical background of c. 545.

IV. *The prophets after the exile.*
Haggai, 520; Zechariah (the author of chapters 1–8), 520–518; Malachi, c. 450; Joel, c. 400· the author or authors of Zech. 9–14, after 350.

The Books of Jonah and Daniel. This leaves two books which are grouped among the prophetic books in the English Old Testament, Jonah and Daniel. The book of Jonah centers around a prophet who lived c. 770 B. C. (2 Kings 14. 25.), but as a literary composition it belongs to a much later age, c. 400–250. The Book of Daniel is not reckoned among the prophetic books in the Jewish canon, but among the Writings. It is not a prophetic work in the narrow sense, but belongs rather to the apocalyptic literature. In its present form it is generally thought to have originated during the Maccabean struggles, c. 168 B. C.

Teaching of the Eighth Century Prophets. The early part of the eighth century was a period of marvelous prosperity for both Israel and Judah, which, however, brought great evils in its train. The religion of Jehovah was threatened by two perils: (1) Moral and religious corruption, due to a wrong conception of the character of Jehovah; (2) The successes of the Assyrians, which were to the great mass of people an evidence of the superiority of the Assyrian deities, and might lead to

apostasy from Jehovah. Either threatened the very life of Jehovah religion. All four prophets of the eighth century were convinced that the only remedy was a right conception of the nature and character of their God; and this they proceeded to supply. (1) All emphasized the universality of the divine sway, and declared that the successes of the Assyrians were due not to Jehovah's weakness, but to the people's sins, which compelled Jehovah to send judgment upon them; and he selected the Assyrians as executioners of his judgment. (2) All sought to impress upon the people a more adequate conception of the character of Jehovah, each emphasizing that phase of the divine character which he considered best adapted to his day and generation. Amos laid special stress upon the righteousness of Jehovah, Hosea upon his love, Isaiah upon his holiness and majesty, Micah upon the divine judgments. Of the four, Isaiah was the greatest. His statesmanship is worthy of note.

Activity of the Seventh Century Prophets. During the religious reaction under Manasseh and Amon the voice of prophecy was not heard. But when Josiah, who seems to have been under prophetic influence from the beginning, came to the throne, in 639, a brighter day dawned. Jeremiah was the prophet of the fall of Jerusalem. At first he attempted reforms, hoping that the nation might yet be saved. When he saw that the doom of the nation was inevitable, he sought to save religion by separating it from the state and other external institutions, and emphasizing its individual and spiritual aspects. He also sought to encourage the troubled saints by promises of a glorious restoration. Zephaniah pronounced a message of judgment upon the

whole world, especially upon Judah and Jerusalem. Nahum was the prophet of Nineveh's downfall. Habakkuk boldly questioned the justice of God in permitting the wicked Jews to oppress their righteous countrymen and the godless Chaldeans to execute judgment upon the more righteous Jews.

Activity of the Prophets of the Exile. Obadiah prophesied soon after the fall of Jerusalem. He condemns the Edomites for their participation in the overthrow of the city. Ezekiel was carried into exile in 597 and began his prophetic ministry in 593. Down to 586 his chief aim was to destroy the false hopes of the first exiles, who expected to be restored to their own land in a short time. After the fall of the city his sole ambition was to maintain and develop among the exiles a deep spiritual religion, in order that they might be prepared for the return when the proper time would arrive. Convinced of the certainty of a future restoration, he mapped out a scheme for the establishment of a religious community in the holy land.

Toward the close of the period of exile the captives received encouragement from the prophecies contained in Isa. 40ff., which were intended to prepare the Jews for the return.

Activity of the Prophets After the Exile. Haggai and Zechariah were contemporaries. They worked chiefly for the rebuilding of the temple, and in this they were successful. The ministry of Malachi is connected with the reform movement under Ezra and Nehemiah. He condemns the faithlessness of the priests, the neglect of the temple service, the nonpayment of tithes, divorces, and the marrying of foreign women. Joel urges a sincere return to Jehovah,

in order to escape the terrors of the day of Jehovah, a foreshadowing of which he sees in a terrible plague of locusts. The author of the Book of Jonah teaches the universality of the love of God, and thus seeks to counteract the narrow exclusiveness of the postexilic Judaism. The author of Daniel means to encourage the troubled Jews of the Maccabean period.

Decline and Extinction of Prophecy. The golden age of Hebrew prophecy was from Amos to Jeremiah; with Ezekiel began the period of decline, which continued until living prophecy gave way to other agencies of instruction. The reasons for this decline can easily be seen: 1. Early in the postexilic period the ultimate authority was placed in the written law, which sought to lay down rules meeting every experience of life. The prophets were succeeded by the scribes, whose duty it was to expound that which was written. 2. The great prophets had covered the entire field of theology and morals; and the new demand was for men who could systematize these truths and teach them to the people. This in itself would not do away with prophetic experience; but with the law as ultimate criterion, instead of a living union with God, the danger was very real, and subsequent events show that the religious teachers yielded to the temptation. 3. A third reason which must have exerted some influence was the destruction of the national life. The nation was the subject of the great prophetic utterances. When the nation was gone the task of the prophet was in part done. The readjustment was along legal and ceremonial lines, which crowded out the prophets.

Jesus and the Prophets. The voice of Hebrew prophecy was silenced, but the truth proclaimed

throughout the centuries continued to live; and when the great prophet of Nazareth appeared, he gathered from his predecessors all that was permanent and divine, and, quickening it by his own mighty personality, he sent it down the ages until by its life-giving power it should quicken all men and make them friends of God and prophets.

CHAPTER III

AMOS

POLITICAL CONDITIONS IN ISRAEL DURING THE EIGHTH CENTURY B. C.

The Revolution of Jehu. About the year 842 Jehu was placed upon the throne of Israel through a conspiracy in which the prophetic party had no small share (2 Kings 9, 10). Undoubtedly the loyal worshipers of Jehovah expected that he would coöperate with them to purify religion, and at first he did not disappoint them, for he ruthlessly destroyed the worship of Baal and the idolatrous dynasty of Omri. But in the end Jehu proved himself little more than an unscrupulous adventurer, who improved every opportunity to advance his own personal interest. From him pure religion could hope for little permanent aid. True, he rooted out Baalism, but in its place he restored the half-heathenish bull worship introduced by Jeroboam I.

From Jehu to Jeroboam II. Politically, also, his reign proved disastrous. It was during his reign that "Jehovah began to cut off from Israel; and Hazael smote them in all the borders of Israel; from the Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the valley of the Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan" (2 Kings 10. 32, 33). The misfortunes continued under his son and successor Jehoahaz (2 Kings 13. 3, 7). Israel seemed on the verge of destruction; but it

revived once more. Under the successor of Jehoahaz, Joash or Jehoash, the fortunes of Israel began to turn (2 Kings 13. 25). In part at least the victories of Israel at this time were made possible by the advance of Assyria, which compelled Syria to withdraw her forces from the southwestern boundary and concentrate them against that powerful foe in the southeast.

The Reign of Jeroboam II. The successes of Israel continued under Jeroboam II; he became a "saviour" of Israel (2 Kings 14. 27), recovered all the territory that had been lost, and added to it in every direction; he even captured Damascus (2 Kings 14. 23–29). These triumphs in war, the revival of commerce, and the new development of the internal resources raised Israel to a pitch of power and prosperity greater than had been enjoyed since the days of Solomon.

SOCIAL, MORAL, AND RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS

Prosperity and Luxury. The social, moral, and religious conditions in Israel are portrayed very vividly by the prophets of this period, Amos and Hosea. The former paints a glowing picture of the prosperity in Israel. The luxury of the rich, made possible by the increased wealth, met the eyes of the simple herdsman on every hand. The palaces built of hewn stone (5. 11), some of them paneled with ivory (3. 15), the pretentious summer and winter residences (3. 15), the extravagant interior finish (3. 12; 6. 4), all were to him evidence that the former simplicity and stability were threatened with extinction. He could not avoid seeing or hearing the drunken revelries (6. 5, 6), nor could he be blind to the mad extravagance which found satisfaction only in possessing the choicest and best of everything, the

chief oils (6. 6), the most delicate meats (6. 4), the best music (6. 5).

The sanctuaries shared in the general prosperity. The chief sanctuary at Beth-el was under royal patronage (7. 13), and it was thronged with worshipers (9. 1); the other sanctuaries were diligently visited (4. 4; 5. 5; 8. 14); offerings and tithes were brought regularly and in abundance; feasts were celebrated with all possible pomp (4. 4, 5; 5. 21–23).

Violence and Oppression. A nation so prosperous and so zealous in the fulfillment of its religious obligations might well be called blessed. But the prophet was not deceived by the superficial prosperity; he saw the dark side of the nation's life with equal clearness. The wealth and luxury of the rich were obtained by violence and robbery (3. 10); by the oppression of the poor and needy, who were driven into actual slavery by their cruel creditors (2. 6, 7; 8. 6); by dishonest trading, in which every possible advantage was taken of the unsuspecting buyer (8. 4–6); by exacting presents and bribes (5. 11, 12). Women were no better than men; to satisfy their appetites they urged their husbands to greater cruelties (4. 1). Public and private virtue had almost completely died out. The corruption of the courts of justice was notorious (5. 7, 10, 12; 6. 12); the poor could get no satisfactory hearing, justice was bought and sold (5. 12). Immoralities were practiced without shame (2. 7). Tradesmen were impatient at the interruption of their greedy pursuits by the sacred days (8. 5). All humane feelings were smothered (2. 8).

Attitude of the Nobles. The situation was the more hopeless because the leaders, who should have been the protectors and guardians of the people, were the leaders

in vice and crime (6. 1–6), and were indifferent to the "affliction of Joseph" (6. 6). Those who attempted to reprove the wrong and uphold the right were despised and abhorred (5. 10; 7. 10–13).

Self-righteousness. With this disregard of all human and divine law there went, strangely enough, a feeling of absolute security and self-righteousness. The great mass of people believed that, in view of their painstaking observance of the external ceremonial, they had a claim upon the divine favor, and that Jehovah was bound to be with them and to protect them from all harm (5. 14). This deplorable religious, moral, and social condition was all due to a false conception of the nature and character of Jehovah. "When men corrupt the image of God in their hearts, they forthwith proceed to the debasing of themselves, and then to such enmity and strife that the bonds of society are wholly broken."

THE PERSON AND LIFE OF THE PROPHET

Home of Amos. To a loyal adherent of Jehovah conditions must have appeared desperate. Something must be done if the religion of Jehovah was to be saved. Amos came to the front to stem and, if possible, turn the tide. Though his message was to the northern kingdom, the prophet came from Tekoa (1. 1), a town of Judah (7. 12), about six miles south of Bethlehem and about twelve miles south of Jerusalem.

Occupations. Amos was not a prophet by education or profession (7. 14). His occupation was that of a herdsman (1. 1; 7. 14); literally, "a keeper of *nakad* sheep," which is a species of sheep small and stunted in growth, with short legs and ill-formed faces, but highly esteemed for their wool.

Amos also calls himself "one who handles the sycomore fig," R.V., "a dresser of sycomore trees" (7. 14). The sycomore to which reference is here made is a tree which attains the size of a walnut tree; it has wide-spreading branches, and is therefore a favorite shade-tree (Luke 19. 14). The fruit, which grows in clusters on little sprigs rising directly out of the stem, is like a small fig in shape and size, but insipid and woody in taste. It is infested with a small insect, and unless the fruit is punctured to allow the insect to escape, it does not become edible. With the insect escapes a bitter juice, and then the fruit ripens and becomes edible, though never very palatable. The operation of puncturing the fruit is undoubtedly meant in the case of Amos.

The Prophet's Preparation through his Occupation. It was while following his daily occupation that the divine call reached Amos (7. 15); but the call did not find him unprepared. He belonged to the "right-minded minority" among the Hebrews, that, in spite of all influences to the contrary, retained its faith and loyalty to Jehovah. With an open mind and a quickened conscience he undoubtedly often meditated upon the things of God as he dwelt in the solitude of the desert. Accustomed to the simpler life of the herdsman, he would feel more keenly the extravagance, luxury, and corruption of the aristocracy. Compelled to defend himself and his flock against the dangers of the desert, he would not easily shrink from the dangers confronting a prophet of Jehovah. Carefully watching every shadow and noise, not knowing how soon a wild beast would rush upon him from the apparent quietness, he readily developed the vigilance and power of dis-

cernment which kept him from being deceived by the superficial piety and prosperity of his countrymen.

Amos's Visits to the Cities of Israel. The influence of the lonely shepherd life in shaping Amos into a "vessel meet for the Master's use" cannot easily be overestimated. But Amos did not receive his training exclusively in the solitude of the desert. "As a wool grower, Amos must have had his yearly journeys among the markets of the land; and to such were probably due his opportunities for familiarity with northern Israel, the originals of his vivid pictures of her town life, her commerce, and her worship at the great sanctuaries."

The Keen Perception of Amos. To these sights Amos brought from the desert a penetrating vision, a quickened conscience, and keen powers of discernment. "He saw the raw facts—the poverty, the cruel negligence of the rich, the injustice of the rulers, the immoralities of the priests. The meaning of these things he questioned with as much persistency as he questioned every suspicious sound or sight upon the pastures of Tekoa. He had no illusions; he knew a mirage when he saw one. Neither the military pride of the people, fostered by recent successes over Syria, nor the dogmas of their religion, which asserted Jehovah's swift triumph over the heathen, could prevent him from knowing that the immorality of Israel meant Israel's political downfall. He was one of those recruits from common life by whom religion and the state have always been reformed. Springing from the laity and very often from among the working classes, their freedom from dogmas and routine, as well as from the compromising interests of wealth, rank, and party, renders them experts in life to a degree that almost no professional priest, statesman,

or journalist, however honest or sympathetic, can rival. Into politics they bring facts, but into religion they bring vision."

The Prophet's Experience at Beth-el. Such a man, prepared, under the divine providence, by his very occupation, was Amos when he heard the call of Jehovah. A man of his character could not refuse to obey the divine voice. He left his flocks and sycomore groves and journeyed to Beth-el, the religious center of the northern kingdom. There under the shadow of the royal sanctuary (7. 13) he delivered his God-given message of warning and exhortation. How long he remained at Beth-el we do not know. Finally Amaziah, the chief priest, aroused by the announcement of the overthrow of the sanctuaries and of the dynasty of Jeroboam, accused Amos of treason and bade him return to his own home and make a living there. Amos was not so easily frightened; he defended his action and repeated his message of judgment.

Later Life of Amos. Of Amos's later life we know nothing. But in view of the well-planned disposition of his prophecies, and in view of the reference "two years before the earthquake" (1. 1)—showing that the words were not written until after the earthquake had occurred—it is reasonable to suppose that after he had completed his prophetic ministration he returned to Tekoa, took up his former occupation, and at his leisure arranged his prophecies in their present form in writing, or, at least, that they were written under his direction.

The Date of Amos. The date of Amos's appearance is fixed by 1. 1 during the reign of Jeroboam II of Israel (c. 782–741) and Uzziah of Judah (c. 789–737); in other words, between about 780 and 740. From a com-

parison of 6. 14 with 2 Kings 14. 25 we may further infer that when the prophet appeared the conquests of Jeroboam were accomplished, and the tone of the entire book suggests that the evil results of these successes were already felt. Consequently it may be safe to place the activity of Amos after the middle of Jeroboam's reign, about 755.

THE MESSAGE OF AMOS

Logical Arrangement of the Book. Either the prophet himself or some of his disciples collected the substance of Amos's message into what is now known as the Book of Amos. The arrangement of the separate utterances is not chronological but logical, the thought being developed as follows: The book opens with *threats* of judgment against the surrounding nations, against Judah and especially against Israel; these are followed by a presentation of the *reasons* for the judgment; five visions of the *execution* of the judgment; and, after a brief reference to the *effects* upon both godly and ungodly, the book closes with a description of the *exaltation and glory* of the remnant that will escape the judgment.

The Book of Amos falls naturally into three divisions: Chapters 1, 2, the prologue; chapters 3–6, a series of discourses; chapters 7–9, a series of visions, interrupted by a piece of narrative and short remarks on the same subjects as are discussed in chapters 3–6.

The Prologue, Chapters 1 and 2. Substance and form combine to show that chapters 1 and 2 constitute a connected whole. Following the title (1. 1) and the preface (1. 2) comes a preparatory section (1. 3—2. 5) leading up to the central thought, the condemnation

of Israel (2. 6–16). Every listener would admit that Damascus, Philistia, Phœnicia, Edom, Ammon, and Moab, all neighboring nations which again and again had manifested a spirit of hostility against Israel, deserved the wrath of Jehovah. Even Judah, more or less hostile since the division of the kingdom, merited judgment. Consequently these opening denunciations would awaken a ready response and win the good will of the hearers. When he had thus prepared the way the prophet burst forth in a message of denunciation and judgment upon Israel. By their silent consent to the condemnation of the other nations they had pronounced the sentence of doom upon themselves.

Discourses of Denunciation, Chapters 3–6. The denunciation of Israel in 2. 6–16 may be called the thesis of the Book of Amos; the rest is simply an elaboration of this thesis. Chapters 3–6 form the main part of the entire book. It consists of five sections which may be called discourses, in which the indictment and sentence of 2. 6–16 are expanded and justified.

Condemnation of the Ruling Classes, 3. 1—4. 3. The first discourse (3. 1—4. 3) is intended primarily for the ruling classes. It begins with an admission that Jehovah had *known* Israel in a special manner. From this fact the people drew the inference that Jehovah would always be on their side, irrespective of their life and conduct, and that the divine care in the past was a guarantee of the people's safety in the future. In reply the prophet points out briefly that the popular belief is unwarranted, and that the inferences drawn from the divine choice are false; that the divine choice brought to Israel certain privileges, and that these privileges involved special obligations. Since they failed to meet

these obligations, the fact of the divine choice only increased their guilt, and now makes inevitable their punishment by a righteous God (3. 1, 2).

This startling announcement would arouse derision and opposition. To ward off these the prophet proceeds to point out that, strange as the declaration may seem, it is of Jehovah (3–8). In 9ff. he calls upon the surrounding nations to testify against Israel. The privileges of Israel were superior to those of other nations, nevertheless their crimes are so heinous that they startle even heathen nations (9, 10). This condition of affairs makes judgment inevitable (11–15). A special judgment will fall upon the luxury-loving and self-indulgent ladies of the capital, who are in part responsible for the prevailing corruption (4. 1–3).

The Unheeded Chastisements, 4. 4–13. The second discourse (4. 4–13) is addressed to the people at large. The occasion was probably a religious gathering when the people, by their zeal for the external requirements, accompanied by an utter disregard of the divine ethical demands, had revealed their utter misapprehension of the will of Jehovah. In an ironical vein Amos exhorts them to continue their heartless ceremonial worship, "for this pleaseth *you*," implying at the same time that Jehovah takes no delight in it (4, 5). Again and again he sought to make them understand his dissatisfaction with their conduct, and to bring them to their senses by means of seven natural calamities, but in vain (6–11). Hence he can do nothing but send a final blow, for which they must now prepare themselves (12, 13).

Lamentation, Denunciation, Exhortation, Threats of Ruin, 5. 1–17. The third discourse (5. 1–17) opens with

a dirge in which the overthrow of Israel is represented as accomplished (1–3). This fate is well merited, since the people have utterly disregarded the demands of Jehovah. They have sought him by means of a ritual which he does not value; on the other hand, they have spurned the virtues which he prizes (4–10). This condemnation is followed by an ascription of praise to Jehovah, to remind the hearers of his majesty, and thus to impress them with the importance of heeding the message. They are apparently incorrigible, therefore swift judgment will overtake them (11–13); nevertheless sincere repentance may result in the salvation of at least a remnant (14, 15). But the prophet seems to realize that such hope is vain; at any rate, he reiterates the message of doom (16, 17).

The Terrors of the Day of Jehovah, 5. 18–27. The fourth discourse (5. 18–27) speaks of the darkness and despair of the day of Jehovah. This day was thought to be a day of conflict in which Jehovah would manifest himself in the destruction of his enemies and the exaltation of his friends. The people looked upon themselves as the friends of Jehovah; hence they were yearning for the coming of the day of exaltation. Upon these mistaken souls Amos pronounces a woe: They will be sorely disappointed, for it will prove to them not a day of exaltation but a day of terror and disaster (18–20). It cannot be otherwise, since their actions have shown them to be enemies of Jehovah. Their service is an abomination to him, because it is not in accord with his requirements (21–25). As a result the terrors of Jehovah will fall upon them in the form of exile (26, 27).

Woe upon the Luxurious, the Self-confident, and the

Proud, 6. 1–14. The prophet turns once more to the leaders of the people, who, reveling in wealth and luxury, were perfectly content with the present state of things, and were completely indifferent to the ruin threatening the people (6. 1–6). Exile will be their punishment (7). The whole city and nation will be given over to destruction, because the inhabitants have perverted truth and righteousness and have put their trust in their own resources (8–14).

Three Visions of Judgment, 7. 1–9. With chapter 7 begins the third main division of the Book of Amos. Its distinctive characteristic is the presence of five visions, by means of which the prophet seeks to enforce the contents of the discourses in the preceding parts, laying special emphasis upon the certainty and finality of the judgment. Two visions—the swarm of locusts and the devouring fire—describe a calamity which had already caused much suffering and was threatening complete destruction, when Jehovah in his mercy averted the final catastrophe (7. 1–6). The third vision—the master builder with the plumb line—does not picture the calamity itself, but portrays Jehovah as decreeing the utter destruction of the house of Israel (7–9).

The Antagonism of the Chief Priest, 7. 10–17. The three visions are followed by an historical section (10–17), in which Amos narrates how the announcement of the judgment stirred the antagonism of the chief priest at Beth-el, who attempted to drive Amos back to Judah. The prophet could not be silenced; he justified his presence by an appeal to the call he received from Jehovah, and repeated his threat, adding a personal woe upon the chief priest and his family.

Closing Visions and Exhortations, 8. 1—9. 10. The fourth vision—the basket of summer fruit—announces that the time of mercy is past; the end has come upon Israel (8. 1–3). To this vision Amos adds fresh denunciations of Israel's sins and announcements of judgment (4–14). The fifth vision—the smitten sanctuary—differs in form from the preceding four, but its purpose is the same, to make clear that Jehovah is determined to make an end of the sinful kingdom (9. 1–6). The prophet combats again the misapprehension that their former choice by Jehovah can be regarded as a permanent safeguard (7, 8), and once more he predicts judgment, now calling special attention to its disciplinary purpose, and promises the preservation of a sound kernel (9, 10).

Promises of a Bright Future, 9. 11–15. The book closes with promises of a bright future to this faithful remnant. The dynasty of David will be restored to power (11), the surrounding nations will be reconquered (12), extraordinary fertility will bless the soil (13), the exiles will be restored to their own land, there to live forever in prosperity and joy (14, 15).

THE TEACHING OF AMOS

The Need of the Eighth Century. Attention has been called on page 30 to the dangers which threatened the religion of Jehovah during the eighth century B. C., and to the manner in which Amos and the other prophets of that period sought to overcome them. The fundamental need was a statement or restatement, on the one hand, of the true nature and character of Jehovah; on the other, of the proper relation between Jehovah and Israel, as also between Jehovah and the other

nations. Amos and his contemporaries in the prophetic office supplied this demand. The teaching of Amos may conveniently be summarized under two heads: 1. The prophet's conception of Jehovah, the God of Israel; 2. The prophet's conception of Israel, the people of Jehovah.

1. **The Prophet's Conception of Jehovah.**—*Monotheism.* Amos is a monotheist. He believes that there is only one true God, namely, Jehovah, whose prophet he knows himself to be. Though the dogma of monotheism is nowhere taught, the tone of the entire book places the subject beyond doubt. "No one," says Marti, "can fail to observe that in this belief of Amos monotheism is present in essence if not in name."

(1) *Personality.* Concerning the nature and character of this one God, Amos teaches that he is a person. The God of Amos is capable of every emotion, volition, and activity of which a person is capable. He swears by himself (6. 8; compare 4. 2), he repents (7. 3), he communicates with others (3. 7), he issues commands (9. 3, 4), he determines upon lines of action (6. 8; 7. 3), he hates and abhors (5. 21, 22; 6. 8).

(2) *Omnipotence.* The omnipotence of Jehovah may be seen in the acts of creation (4. 13; 5. 8, 9; 9. 6), as also in the continuous control which he exercises over all the forces of nature (4. 6–11, 13; 5. 8; 8. 9; 9. 5, 6). An even stronger proof of the supreme power of Jehovah is the fact that he controls the nations of the earth and determines their destiny (1. 3—2. 3; 2. 9–16; 9. 7; etc.). Amos's conception of Jehovah's infinite power finds expression also in the divine titles he uses—"the Lord Jehovah" (twenty times); "Jehovah, the God of hosts" (4. 13; 5. 14, 15; 6. 8, 14; compare 5. 27);

"the Lord Jehovah of hosts" (9. 5); "the Lord Jehovah, the God of hosts" (3. 13); "Jehovah, the God of hosts, the Lord" (5. 16).

(3) *Omnipresence.* The omnipresence of Jehovah is at least implied in chapters 1 and 2, and is unambiguously taught in 9. 2ff., which is one of the most terrible and, at the same time, most sublime passages in the whole book.

(4) *Omniscience.* Amos 9. 2ff. also teaches that God knows all things. He needs omniscience to discover the hiding place of the fugitive sinners, and without it he could not reveal unto man his, that is, man's, thought (4. 13).

(5) *Righteousness.* Perhaps the most important element in Amos's teaching concerning the character of Jehovah is his constant emphasis of Jehovah's righteousness. Jehovah is not partial to Israel; he deals with all nations, Israel included, according to ethical principles (3. 1, 2; 7. 7–9; 8. 1–3; 9. 8; etc.). He takes no delight in their superficial and external worship. His demand is, "Let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a perennial stream" (5. 24; compare 4. 4, 5; 5. 21–23).

(6) *Mercy.* Though Amos dwells so persistently on the righteousness of Jehovah, and thus gives to his whole message a tone of severity, he does not altogether forget that Jehovah is a merciful God. True, he does not emphasize this phase of the divine character as does his younger contemporary Hosea; nevertheless, here and there glimpses of it may be had. Twice he dared to intercede on behalf of the sinful nation (7. 2, 5), and he held out the promise that under certain conditions Jehovah might be gracious unto a remnant of Joseph (5. 15).

2. **Amos's Conception of Israel.**—(1) *Israel the People of Jehovah.* The prophet's teaching concerning Israel is a reflection of or a deduction from his teaching concerning Jehovah. Amos is thoroughly convinced that, though Jehovah sustains vital relations to other nations, he has a peculiar interest in Israel—Israel is in a special sense the people of Jehovah (2. 9, 10; 3. 1, 2).

(2) *The Divine Ideal for Israel.* As the people of Jehovah, Israel should reflect the character of her God; otherwise intimate fellowship between the two is impossible (3. 2; 5. 4, 24; 6. 14).

(3) *Jehovah's Revelations to Israel.* Jehovah revealed himself "in divers manners" to the Israelites, in order that they might know his will and do it. He did so preëminently through the prophets and Nazirites (2. 11; 3. 7), through the law—to Judah (2. 4), through Amos (3. 8; 7. 15), and through the acts of the Divine Providence (4. 6–11). The privileges involved in these special manifestations brought increased responsibilities and obligations to Israel.

(4) *Israel's Shortcomings.* Through neglect of these responsibilities and obligations Israel fell far short of Jehovah's ideal for his people. From beginning to end the prophecy abounds in pictures of Israel's faithlessness. Righteousness and justice were trampled under foot (5. 7), the poor and the needy were oppressed (2. 6, 7; 3. 10; 5. 11, 12), the name of Jehovah was dishonored by the immoral practices connected with the worship (2. 7, 8); indeed, the whole worship was an abomination to Jehovah, because it was not offered in the right spirit, nor was it backed by a consistent life (5. 21–25).

(5) *The Inevitable Judgment.* The righteousness of Jehovah demands the execution of judgment upon the sinful kingdom (2. 13–16; 3. 14, 15; 9. 8; etc.). This judgment, the prophet thinks, will take the form of a foreign invasion and exile, which will result in the destruction of the nation Israel (3. 11; 4. 3; 5. 27; 6. 14).

(6) *The Salvation of a Remnant and its Future Glory.* From the judgment a faithful remnant will escape (5. 15; 9. 9). Around this remnant center the hopes of the prophet for the future. It will form the nucleus of the new kingdom of God, whose rulers will be of the dynasty of David, which will be restored to power. The surrounding nations will be reconquered; and the soil will be blessed with extraordinary fertility, so that the new nation may dwell in peace and prosperity forever (9. 11–15). The picture of the future glory is a very simple one, to be enlarged and spiritualized by later prophets.

Permanent Lessons of the Book of Amos. Kirkpatrick calls attention to the following as the most important permanent religious and moral lessons of the Book of Amos: (1) Justice between man and man is one of the divine foundations of society; (2) Privilege implies responsibility; (3) Failure to recognize responsibility is sure to bring punishment; (4) Nations, and, by analogy, individuals, are bound to live up to the light and knowledge granted to them; (5) The most elaborate worship is but an insult to God when offered by those who have no mind to conform to his demands.

CHAPTER IV

HOSEA

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF HOSEA'S ACTIVITY

Date of Hosea. A few years after the withdrawal of Amos from Israel a new prophet arose to continue his work. While the Book of Hosea does not state when Hosea's ministry began, the testimony of the title, the apparent imminence of the judgment announced, and internal evidence combine to show that his prophetic activity began after the close of Amos's ministry. Concerning the length of his public career, 1. 1 states that he prophesied in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel. That chapters 1-3 come from the days of Jeroboam II is beyond doubt, and internal evidence makes it equally certain that chapters 4–14 reflect the troubled period subsequent to his death. It is not so clear, however, that he continued to prophesy during the reigns of Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. His silence concerning the invasion of Judah by Israel and Damascus, his reference to Gilead as Israelite territory, and his mention of Assyria as an ally of Israel make it probable that Hosea did not prophesy during or subsequent to the invasion of Judah in 735-734, which caused the advance of Assyria against Israel, which in turn led to the loss of Gilead. Consequently the activity of Hosea may be assigned to the period between 750 and 735 B. C.

Political Conditions in Israel. During these years Israel was rapidly drifting to its doom. The situation remained for some years as it was during the time of Amos's activity; but with the death of Jeroboam political conditions changed. The reign of this king had been a long one, marked by successes without and prosperity within; but the dynasty of Jehu, of which Jeroboam was the fourth ruler, did not satisfy the eighth century prophets, though it had been placed upon the throne with the sanction and aid of the prophetic order (2 Kings 9, 10). Amos announced the overthrow of the "house of Jeroboam" (7. 9), and almost the first words in the Book of Hosea announce judgment upon this dynasty (1. 4, 5; the reference is to 2 Kings 10. 11). The threat was fulfilled shortly after the death of Jeroboam. Party spirit, no longer held in check by a strong hand, broke out, and his son and successor, Zechariah, was slain in a conspiracy after a reign of only six months. With him the dynasty of Jehu came to an end. There followed a period of anarchy of which Hosea supplies a vivid picture (7. 3–7; 8. 4). Kings came forward in rapid succession, and the external policy was one of weakness and vacillation. Shallum, the murderer of Zechariah, was overthrown after one month by Menahem, who, to strengthen his position, bought the support of Tiglath-pileser IV of Assyria (2 Kings 15. 19, 20; compare Hos. 8. 9, 10). At the same time, or shortly after, another party was seeking help from Egypt (12. 1). Menahem died a natural death, and was succeeded by his son, Pekahiah, who after two years was assassinated by Pekah (2 Kings 15. 25). The new king entered into an alliance with Rezin of Damascus, and together they invaded Judah (2 Kings 16. 6; Isa. 7. 1–3). Pekah

was murdered by Hoshea (2 Kings 15. 30), with the connivance and support of the Assyrian king, in 734, and Hoshea became the last king of the northern kingdom.

Moral and Religious Conditions. Little needs to be added to what has been said in connection with Amos concerning the moral and religious conditions in Israel. At the time of Hosea the excesses had become even more marked. The prophet sums up his indictments in one word, "whoredom." Israel, the spouse of Jehovah, had proved faithless to her husband. The evidences of her unfaithfulness were seen in the sphere of religion, of ethics, and of politics, and the sins provoking the anger of Jehovah and of his prophet center around these three heads. The Israelites were without the knowledge of Jehovah (4. 6; 5. 4; etc.); as a result they were ignorant concerning the real requirements of Jehovah, and their worship was not acceptable to him. Nominally they paid homage to Jehovah (5. 6; 6. 6ff.); in reality they honored the Baals, that is, the gods of the native Canaanites. This illegitimate worship called forth Hosea's severest and most persistent condemnation (2. 2ff.; 4. 11ff.; 8. 4ff.; 9. 10; 10. 1ff.; 13. 1ff.; 14. 1–3). In the sphere of ethics their lack of the knowledge of Jehovah resulted in conduct absolutely contrary to the demands of Jehovah; immoralities, crimes, and vices of every description were practiced openly and in defiance of all prophetic exhortations (4. 1, 2, 6ff., 13, 18; 6. 8, 9; 7. 1–7; 10. 4, 9, 12ff.). In the sphere of politics the faithlessness manifested itself in a twofold manner: (1) in rebellion against all legitimate authority, and assassinations of various kings and princes (7. 1–7; 8. 4; 13. 10, 11), and (2) in dependence upon human defenses (8. 14; 10. 13; 14. 3) and foreign

alliances (5. 13; 7. 8, 11–13; 8. 9; 12. 1; 14. 3; compare 7. 16; 8. 13; 9. 3ff.; 10. 6; 11. 11) rather than upon the power of Jehovah.

THE PERSONAL LIFE OF HOSEA

Home of Hosea. Hosea had one important advantage over his predecessor. Amos was a native of Judah, sent to the northern kingdom on a temporary mission; Hosea was a citizen of the north, bound by a sympathetic patriotism to the kingdom whose destruction he was commissioned to predict. "In every sentence," says Ewald," it appears that Hosea had not only visited the kingdom of Ephraim, as Amos had done, but that he is acquainted with it from the depths of his heart, and follows all its doings, aims, and fortunes with the profound feelings gendered of such a sympathy as is conceivable in the case of a native prophet only."

Personal History of the Prophet. Little is known of the prophet's personal history. He represents himself as marrying Gomer, who became the mother of several children, to whom he gave names symbolic of the destiny of his people (chapter 1). This Gomer proved unfaithful and left his home, but in the end was bought back by Hosea and restored to his home, though, temporarily at least, not to the full privileges of wifehood (3. 1–3). Hosea prophesied for a number of years. A Jewish legend states that he died in Babylon, that his body was carried to Galilee and buried in Safed, northwest of the Sea of Galilee, on the highest point in that region. According to another tradition he was a native of Gilead and was buried there. The grave of Nebi Osha (the prophet Hosea) is shown near es-Salt, a few miles south of the Jabbok.

Occupation. There is nothing to indicate what was the occupation of Hosea. The attempt has been made to prove that he belonged to the priestly class, but the evidence is not conclusive. Whatever his occupation, Hosea was a keen observer of the life about him, and he reveals a remarkable familiarity with the past history and the ancient traditions of his people. To judge from the images and comparisons in which the book abounds it would seem that the prophet's home was in the country and not in the city.

Hosea's Marriage. The domestic experience of Hosea played an important part in the preparation of Hosea for his prophetic ministry to Israel. Of the various interpretations of the verses dealing with Hosea's marriage (1. 2, 3) the following seems the most natural and the one most in accord with the language of the prophet. Gomer was unstained when she became the wife of Hosea. The evil tendencies were within her, but they had not yet manifested themselves. Hosea loved her dearly, but his love was not sufficient to prevent the outbreak. She finally abandoned him for her paramours or, perhaps, the licentious rites connected with the worship of the Baals.

As the prophet, his heart still burning with tender love for his faithless spouse, sat and pondered over his past domestic experience he came to see that even this sad occurrence was not a blind chance, but in accord with Divine Providence. Jehovah led him into this experience in order to teach him the lesson which he in turn was to teach Israel, and which he could not have learned as well in any other way. At the time he did not realize the significance of the occurrence; only gradually did it dawn upon him that as far as his mes-

sage to his people was concerned the unhappy alliance was the first step in his prophetic career. It is from the vantage point of this later recognition that Hosea describes, in 1. 2, 3, the earlier experience. It would be wrong, however, to assume that Hosea was not a prophet until all these experiences had come to him. He must have been conscious of a prophetic commission even before the birth of his firstborn, else how would he have come to give him the symbolic name? Nevertheless, the tone of the entire book shows that his own personal domestic experience was the means whereby God spoke to him and supplied him with his prophetic message to Israel. Therefore Hosea is justified in calling the impulse to marry Gomer the beginning of his prophetic ministry.

The experience of Hosea in thus recognizing at a later time the hand of God in events already past is not absolutely unique, for it often happens that God's instruments act under his direction without being conscious that they are thus guided; only at a later time their eyes are opened so that they see the reality of the Divine Providence. If anyone should ask why God laid this heavy burden upon his prophet, reply may be made that it appears to be a universal law of this sin-stricken world that God makes perfect through suffering; that redemption is wrought through sacrifice.

THE MESSAGE OF HOSEA

The Book of Hosea contains the substance of the prophet's earnest and persistent appeals by which he sought to bring the faithless nation back to its Divine Master. The book falls naturally into two well-marked divisions, chapters 1–3 and 4–14.

Hosea and Gomer, 1. 2–9; 3. 1–3. The first division sets forth the prophet's marriage and gives the application of the story: Jehovah's love and Israel's faithlessness. The story is contained in 1. 2–9 and 3. 1–3, while 1. 10—2. 23 and 3. 4, 5 give the exposition. The prophet relates how, at the divine command, he took to wife Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim (1. 2, 3). By her he had three children, to whom he gave names symbolic of some of the truths he taught: Jezreel, symbolizing the overthrow of the dynasty of Jehu (4, 5), Lo-ruhamah, announcing that Jehovah will have no more mercy upon Israel (6, 7), and Lo-ammi, symbolizing the utter rejection of Israel (8, 9). In time Gomer left her home to give herself more unreservedly to her shameful practices; chapter 3. 2 seems to imply that she became the slave concubine of another. But Hosea continued to love her and, impelled by love, bought her back, though for a while he did not restore her to the full privileges of wifehood (3. 1–3).

Jehovah and Israel, 1. 10—2. 23; 3. 4, 5. This domestic experience is presupposed in 1. 10—2. 23 and 3. 4, 5. The historical figures in 1. 1–9 and 3. 1–3, the prophet, his wife, and his children, here become allegorical figures. Israel is the adulterous wife, Jehovah the deceived but still loving husband, the individual Israelites are the children. Some of these have remained free from the sins of the mother. To these faithful individuals Jehovah addresses himself, urging them to attempt the restoration of the faithless wife and mother, Israel, to the wronged but yearning husband, Jehovah. The utterance opens with a description of Israel's whoredom (2. 2–5), which is followed by an

announcement of the evil consequences of the faithlessness (6–13); it closes with a delineation of the efforts to be made by Jehovah for the purpose of winning back the faithless wife, and of the glories awaiting her when she comes to her senses (14–23; compare 1. 10—2. 1). The promise of restoration is repeated in 3. 5, but before Israel can enjoy the new blessings she must pass through a long period of seclusion, when she will be deprived of all her religious and civil institutions (4).

The Second Book of Hosea, Chapters 4–14. Chapters 4–14, sometimes called the "Second Book of Hosea," contain the substance of the prophet's discourses during the years subsequent to the death of Jeroboam II. It is almost impossible to trace in this second division a definite plan of arrangement, though fresh beginnings may be noted in 4. 1; 5. 1; 9. 1; 11. 12; 13. 1; 14. 1. From beginning to end the prophet has in mind the hopeless condition of his people; he exhorts, laments, warns, pleads, denounces, promises—in fact, uses every possible means of persuasion—in order that he may win back the people to a pure and acceptable service of Jehovah.

The Nation's Guilt, Chapter 4. This section opens with a solemn summons to hear the indictment brought against the people by Jehovah. The predominant note in chapter 4 is the nation's guilt: religiously and morally the people are hopelessly corrupt. In verses 1–10 the moral corruption in everyday life receives special condemnation; in verses 11–19, the immoral practices connected with the religious cult. Both sections close with announcements of judgment (9, 10, 19). In connection with the general condemnation Hosea accuses the priests of being chiefly responsible for the

lamentable condition of the people (especially 4–8). They have failed to instruct the people in the "law of Jehovah."

Universal Corruption and the Inevitable Judgment, Chapter 5. Chapters 5–8, which are closely connected, present a detailed account of the manner in which corruption penetrated the entire public life and affected all from the highest to the lowest. Interspersed are exhortations, warnings, and threats of inevitable destruction. Chapter 5 falls naturally into two parts: verses 1–7, where the emphasis is upon guilt, and 8–15, which deal primarily with judgment. The address is directed against (1) the priests, (2) the people, and (3) the king and his courtiers. It is not always easy to say which of these receives primary attention. The religious and civil leaders are largely to blame for present conditions, but all must suffer the consequences.

Insincerity an Abomination to Jehovah, Chapter 6. Chapter 5. 15 expresses the hope that Israel will yet return to Jehovah and seek his face. This hope will be realized. Israel will return (6. 1–3), but without real, heartfelt repentance. In the mutual exhortation to return there is not one expression of sorrow for wrongdoing, only anxiety to have distress and calamity removed. Therefore Jehovah is not favorably impressed with the supplication. His reply is contained in 6. 4—8. 14. It is almost impossible to recognize any distinct break throughout this reply. The whole is a severe condemnation of the people's attitude toward Jehovah. Verse 4 may be regarded as the direct reply. Jehovah perceives that the sentiments expressed in 1–3 do not come from the heart. But if

all he has done for his people in the past has failed to lead to repentance, what more can he do? From this question he passes immediately to point out the people's utter misconception of the divine requirements (5, 6), and to delineate their sinful career; the corruption seems incurable (7–11a).

Moral Degradation and Anarchy, 7. 1–7. With 6. 11b begins a new picture of the moral degradation and the resulting anarchy. The mercy of Jehovah, manifesting itself in his willingness to remove the distress, had no salutary effect. Gradually their wrongs have surrounded them until escape seems impossible; even repentance seems out of the question (7. 1, 2). While some details in the interpretation of verses 3–7 are uncertain, the general drift of the prophet's argument is clear. The prophet describes in vivid colors the corruption that pervades the whole nation from the king down, and shows that the existing anarchy is the inevitable result of that corruption. He sees adultery, drunkenness, conspiracy, assassinations everywhere, not one redeeming feature. Jehovah alone can heal the disease, but no one calls upon him (7).

Appeal to Other Nations will End in Destruction, 7. 8–16. Instead, Israel has mingled with the nations, there to learn wisdom and find help (8). Disaster has been the result (9, 10), but still it persists; hither and thither it turns, like a silly dove (11), unaware that it is becoming entangled in a net from which there can be no escape (12). Jehovah at one time expected great things from his children; what a disappointment they have become (13–16a)!

Israel's Rebellion and its Consequences, Chapter 8. Israel has proved a disappointment; defiantly it per-

sists in rebellion; therefore judgment has become inevitable; rapidly it is approaching (7. 16b—8. 3). In verse 4 the prophet renews his attack upon Israel. The political revolutions are rebellions against Jehovah (4); idolatry is an abomination to him (4–6); they must reap what they have sown (7); their appeals to foreign nations will not save them (8–10). Once more he condemns their religious practices; then the section closes with a threat of judgment (11–14).

Exile the Punishment for Religious and Moral Apostasy, 9. 1–9. Chapter 9. 1 marks a new beginning. The prophet beholds the rejoicing of the people at harvest time, perhaps at a joyous religious festival. Rejoicing at such a time is perfectly natural; but, judging from chapter 2, much of the celebration, though nominally in recognition of Jehovah's goodness, was in reality in honor of the Baalim. This the prophet cannot endure. He warns the people not to be too exuberant (1), for the occasions of rejoicing will soon cease. On account of their apostasy Jehovah will withdraw his blessings (2); yea, they will be carried into exile (3), where, upon an unclean land, joyful religious feasts can no longer be celebrated (4, 5); their own land will become a wilderness (6). After announcing the impending doom the prophet points out once more the moral and religious apostasy responsible for the judgment (7–9).

Israel's Apostasy and Punishment, 9. 10–17. Three times in chapters 9–11 (9. 10; 10. 9; 11. 1) Hosea reverts to the early history of Israel to show how loving had been the divine care and how persistent Israel's apostasy and rebellion. In the beginning Israel appeared to Jehovah like a desirable fruit, but ere long

contact with the Canaanitish religion caused contamination, and Israel became an abomination in the sight of Jehovah (10). In consequence, awful judgments will come (11–17). The form of the expected judgments is not quite clear.

The Imminent Destruction, 10. 1–8. Hosea reverts to Israel's guilt once more in chapter 10. Using the figure of a luxuriant vine, he describes Israel's external prosperity; it increased steadily, but the greater the prosperity, the more flagrant the moral and religious corruption (1, 2). Therefore altars, idols, and pillars shall be broken down, the calves of Samaria shall be carried to Assyria, priests and people shall be in terror and shall mourn (2–6); even the king shall be cut off (7). The high places shall be destroyed, thorns and thistles shall grow over them, and in terror the people shall cry for the mountains and hills to fall upon them (8).

Israel's Persistence in Rebellion, 10. 9–15. With verse 9 the prophet begins a new presentation of Israel's guilt. In the very beginning a great crime darkened their history (9); from that time on they have resisted every effort to lead them into a higher life; hence death and destruction await them (9–11). The announcement of judgment is interrupted by an exhortation to repentance (12), which immediately changes again into a threat (13–15).

Jehovah's Love for the Prodigal Israel, Chapter 11. Chapter 11 traces the father's love for the prodigal son in the history of Israel. The prophet points out how great, strong, and tender has been the divine love (1, 3, 4), and how unappreciative and ungrateful the chosen people (2, 7); hence justice demands the ex-

ecution of judgment (5, 6). But Israel is still the son of Jehovah, and the divine compassion goes out for the prodigal (8); therefore the punishment will be tempered by mercy, and after it has accomplished its disciplinary purpose Israel will be restored to the divine favor (9–11).

Israel's Faithlessness and Ingratitude, Chapter 12. Chapter 11. 12 (Hebrew, 12. 1) is closely connected with chapter 12. Israel proved false to Jehovah when it entered into covenants with foreign nations (11. 12; 12. 1); therefore the anger of Jehovah is aroused (2). Three incidents in the history of the patriarch Jacob are mentioned to bring out more distinctly the contrast between the ancestor so anxious for the divine blessing and the descendants so indifferent to Jehovah (3–5). If only they would turn to the God of Jacob, he would have mercy upon them (6). Their only ambition has been to accumulate wealth, and shameful are the means by which they have sought to attain it (7). They glory in their success (8), but it shall avail them nothing, for Jehovah is about to drive Israel back into the desert (9). Persistent have been the efforts on the part of Jehovah to prevent the judgment (10); therefore no one can be blamed but the people (11). By a comparison of the experiences of the nation with those of Jacob in Aram the prophet seeks to show what great things Jehovah has done for the people, and how the divine love was met with persistent ingratitude and provocation; in view of this the sentence must stand (12–14).

Israel has Signed its Own Death Warrant, Chapter 13. Chapter 13 contains one of the most comprehensive and powerful discourses in the book. It opens with a reference to the tribe of Ephraim, which in the be-

ginning occupied a position of prominence in the nation, but signed its own death warrant when it apostatized from Jehovah (1). From this well-known example Israel should have learned its lesson, but it failed to do so; it persisted in shameless idolatry, therefore it will vanish like chaff before the whirlwind (2, 3). The rebellious attitude, the prophet continues, is unintelligible, since the God whom they rejected is the God who led them from the time of the Exodus. Strange to say, the more Jehovah prospered them, the more arrogant they became, the more forgetful of Jehovah; hence he will devour them like a lion (4–8). By rebelling against Jehovah Israel courted destruction, which is now inevitable; no one can prevent it, Jehovah himself can show mercy no longer (9–14). The discourse closes with a threat of utter destruction (15, 16).

Israel's Conversion and the Restoration of the Divine Favor, Chapter 14. Chapter 14 is permeated by a spirit different from that of the preceding chapters; denunciation gives place to promise. The prophet exhorts Israel to return to Jehovah in humility and sorrow (1, 2a). He puts upon the lips of the Israelites words expressive of deepest remorse, and of an earnest determination to remain forever loyal to Jehovah (2b, 3). To their longing cry Jehovah responds that he will graciously pardon and shower upon the God-fearing people blessings hitherto unknown (4–8). Verse 9 stands by itself as an epilogue to the whole book. Whoever desires to become wise and prudent, let him become acquainted with the oracles of Hosea; from them he may learn that the way of Jehovah is right, and that the destiny of men is determined by their attitude toward the divine will.

THE TEACHING OF HOSEA

The message of Hosea is very comprehensive, touching upon social and political questions as well as upon the moral and religious situation, and yet the principles underlying his discourses are few and easily discovered.

The Nature and Character of Jehovah. Fundamental in the teaching of the prophet is his conception of the nature and character of Jehovah. He considers a lack of the knowledge of Jehovah responsible for the corruption of Israel. Had they possessed a proper knowledge of him, the present corruption would have been impossible; and by imparting this knowledge he hopes to bring about a moral transformation.

(1) *Monotheism.* Like Amos, Hosea is a monotheist. There is but one God, and he is the God of Israel, who controls other nations as well (2. 5ff.; 8. 4ff.; 13. 2; 14. 3).

(2) *Omnipotence.* If Jehovah is the only true God, the maker of heaven and earth, the determiner of the destinies of the nations, it follows that he is a God of supreme power, of omnipotence. There are, however, no passages in Hosea such as are found in Amos (4. 13; 5. 8, 9; 9. 5, 6), calling attention to this omnipotence; Hosea assumes it.

(3) *Righteousness.* A most important question was how Jehovah would use this power in dealing with Israel and the other nations. Here again Hosea agrees with Amos in portraying Jehovah as a holy and righteous God, the use of whose power is determined by ethical considerations. Both prophets teach that Jehovah deals with the nations of the earth, Israel included, according to their attitude toward him; he

will always punish sin, even in Israel; righteousness alone can win his favor (9. 9; 8. 13).

(4) *God is Love.* A fourth and, perhaps, the distinguishing element in Hosea's conception of Jehovah is the thought that God is love. This thought colors Hosea's teachings from beginning to end. A favorite expression of Hosea is "loving-kindness." This element is not entirely absent from Amos, though the latter never uses the former's favorite word; nevertheless to Amos Jehovah is primarily the God of righteousness. Amos thinks of him primarily as king and judge, Hosea as husband and father, with a love such as a husband may feel for his wife, and such as a father may treasure for his son. In chapters 1–3 the sin of Israel is represented as "whoredom" (1. 2; 2. 5, 8); but God has not forsaken his faithless spouse, he loves her as much as ever, and by the manifestation of his love he will win her back into permanent heart union (2. 19, 20). The greater part of chapters 4–14 presents a different picture. Jehovah is the father, Israel is the prodigal son; the loving father seeks earnestly to save the wanderer (9. 1, 8; compare 6. 4).

The Covenant between Jehovah and Israel. Closely connected with and dependent upon Hosea's conception of Jehovah's character is his conception of Israel's relation to Jehovah and of the service acceptable to him. Hosea from beginning to end holds fast to the conviction that Israel is in a peculiar sense the people of Jehovah. It has become such through the choice of Jehovah, and the union was cemented by a national covenant, made at the very beginning of Israel's history, that is, at the time of the Exodus (9. 10; 11. 1–4; 12. 9; 13. 4). The intimacy of this covenant relation is de-

scribed under the two figures of marriage (chapters 1–3) and filial relation (11. 1; compare Exod. 4. 22). A covenant always involves mutual obligations. The obligation taken upon himself by Jehovah was to look after the temporal and spiritual needs of his people; this Jehovah has carefully done throughout Israel's entire history. He has supplied the temporal wants (2. 8; 10. 1, 11; 12. 8; 13. 4–6), and he has done his best to supply their spiritual needs. By the voice of living prophecy and the words of law he has sought to teach and direct them (11. 1–4; 7. 15; 8. 12; 12. 10).

Israel's Faithlessness to the Covenant. But, alas, Israel has transgressed the covenant (6. 7; 8. 1). Its obligations may be summed up in one word, "faithfulness"; that is, loyalty to the husband, obedience to the father. Israel's transgression also may be summed up in one word, "faithlessness": the wife followed after paramours (2. 5); the son disregarded the will of the father as revealed by the prophets and in the law. Passages such as 4. 1; 6. 6; 10. 12; 12. 6 call attention to the principal requirements, obedience to which was Israel's duty. Every one of these has been willfully transgressed by the nation from the beginning of its history until the prophet's days (9. 10; 10. 9; 13. 2). Israel having thus persistently disregarded the covenant, Jehovah is compelled to set it aside: "I will drive them out of my house; I will love them no more" (9. 15; compare 2. 9ff.).

The Service Acceptable to Jehovah. Concerning the service of Jehovah the popular conception during the eighth century seems to have been that the bringing of offerings and sacrifices met all religious requirements.

As a result the service of God came to be regarded as a purely external and formal thing. Against this misapprehension Hosea boldly raised his voice, "I desire goodness, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (6. 6; compare 5. 6). The ceremonial was only a means to an end, and therefore secondary; even at its best it could never take the place of pure and undefiled religion; if it ever displaced the weightier matters it became an abomination. In order to secure the divine approbation it must be backed by a right spirit and a pure life. This principle needed to be emphasized by Hosea the more strongly because in his days the ceremonial was far from being at its best; the religious celebrations were accompanied by all manner of excesses (4. 12ff.; 6. 7ff.). It were better to abolish sacrifice than to practice these things in the name of religion. Still worse, true Jehovah worship was unknown; it had become mixed with Canaanitish elements; in reality it was worship of the Baalim, the gods of the native Canaanites (2. 5ff.; 4. 12ff.; 8. 4ff.; 9. 9; 13. 2). Such insult Jehovah could not endure (2. 12, 13).

Promises of a Future Restoration. Other characteristic points in the prophet's teaching are connected with his promises of restoration. Judgment had become inevitable; the religious, moral, and political apostasy of Israel made it incumbent upon Jehovah to vindicate himself in order that true religion might not be lost to the world. But his love is unquenchable; in wrath he will remember mercy. The nation must die, but it will live again.

(1) *The Reëstablishment of a Fellowship of Life and Love with Jehovah.* Hosea, like the other proph-

ets, pictures the restoration in the brightest colors. Amos had described the era subsequent to the restoration as one of extraordinary fertility and prosperity (9. 13); Hosea expresses a similar hope (2. 21, 22; 14. 5–8). But this temporal prosperity is not the supreme goal of our prophet's aspirations; more important to him is the reëstablishment of a fellowship of life and love with Jehovah, a fellowship that will make it possible for the divine purpose concerning Israel to be completely realized (2. 14, 19, 20; 14. 1–3; compare 6. 1–3).

(2) *Repentance a Condition of Restoration.* Another truth emphasized by Hosea more than by Amos is the necessity of sincere, heartfelt repentance as a condition of restoration. "Hosea may be accurately styled the first preacher of repentance, yet so thoroughly did he deal with this subject of eternal interest to the human heart that between him and ourselves almost no teacher has increased the insight with which it has been examined or the passion with which it ought to be enforced." But whereas with us repentance, as, indeed, every religious experience, is individual, with the prophet it was national. The individual element in religion did not receive proper emphasis until about a century and a half after the time of Hosea. He considered repentance to imply the recognition that all sin was committed against God, a deep sorrow for wrongdoing, and an earnest determination to live henceforth in a manner acceptable to God (14. 1–3). Sham repentance Jehovah despises (6. 4ff.).

(3) *Hosea's Vision Limited to Israel.* When Hosea describes the glories of the future he confines himself to the fortunes of the chosen people. Some of the prophets

expect the subjugation of the outside nations by the redeemed Israel, some their destruction by Jehovah himself, others anticipate their conversion. Hosea is silent concerning their destiny.

(4) *The Messianic King.* Another feature demanding attention is the personal element in his Messianic hope. Amos, without referring to an individual Messianic king, announced that the future glory would center around the dynasty of David (9. 11); Hosea declared that the north and the south would be reunited under one head (1. 11), and again, "They shall seek. . . . David their king" (3. 5). That these passages refer to the establishment of the Messianic kingdom cannot be doubted; but commentators are not agreed as to whether the prophet had in mind a person, a second David (Jer. 30. 9; Ezek. 24. 23, 24; 37. 24, 25), or whether "David" is equivalent to "house (dynasty) of David" (Amos 9. 11). The references are perhaps not numerous enough to put the interpretation beyond question, yet it would seem that the personal view is the more natural. If so, Hosea is the first prophet to mention the ideal ruler in whom center the hopes and anticipations of later generations.

Failure of Amos and Hosea to Save Israel. Amos and Hosea tried earnestly to prevent the downfall of the northern kingdom, but in vain. The vacillating policy of the court was bound to arouse the wrath of Assyria, and when finally in 725 B. C. an alliance was made with Egypt, the Assyrian king, Shalmaneser IV, dispatched an army into Israel. The king was captured, the country overrun, and the capital besieged. After three years, in the closing days of 722 or the opening days of 721, Samaria fell, soon

after the accession of Sargon II, the successor of Shalmaneser. With the fall of Samaria the northern kingdom disappeared from the scene of action. The fate of Jehovah religion now rested with the kingdom in the south.

CHAPTER V

ISAIAH

JUDAH DURING THE EIGHTH CENTURY B. C.

The Political Situation. The political, social, moral, and religious conditions in Judah during the activity of Isaiah and his younger contemporary Micah were essentially the same as in Israel during the ministry of Amos and Hosea. Uzziah became king of Judah about 789. The Book of Kings says little concerning his reign. The Chronicler furnishes more complete information. Combining the accounts of the two, we learn that Uzziah, who died between 740 and 736, left to his son Jotham a kingdom enjoying a great measure of external prosperity.

Wars of Uzziah. While Jeroboam II was extending the borders of Israel in the north Uzziah was strengthening the kingdom of Judah in the south. He waged successful wars against the Philistines and annexed part of their territory to his own. The Ammonites and Edomites were his vassals. He fortified Jerusalem and other cities, reorganized the army, and stocked the arsenals with ammunition of war.

Development of the Internal Resources. In addition, he was not unmindful of the arts of peace. He developed very extensively the natural resources of the country. Being a lover of agriculture, he possessed many fields which were carefully tilled; watchtowers were erected for the protection of the king's cattle, and

cisterns were dug for the collection and retention of the winter rains.

Revival of Commerce. Uzziah was also interested in commerce. He rebuilt the port of Elath on the eastern arm of the Red Sea, by which foreign commerce might find its way into Judah. Sela, which had been captured by the king's father, Amaziah, commanded the trade route to southern Arabia. All this brought to Judah a prosperity unequaled since the days of David and Solomon.

The Reigns of Jotham and Ahaz. Uzziah was succeeded by his son Jotham, who continued his father's policy. Jotham's independent reign—he had been coregent with his father for some years (2 Kings 15. 5)—was very brief. Toward its close Judah was threatened with an invasion by the allied forces of Damascus and Israel. The real crisis, however, did not come until he had been succeeded by his son Ahaz. At first the hostile armies were successful, and "the heart of the king trembled, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the forest tremble with the wind" (Isa. 7. 2). In despair Ahaz, against the protest of the prophet Isaiah, appealed for assistance to Tiglath-pileser IV, of Assyria. The Assyrians advanced with great rapidity, and the two nations were severely punished. Judah was saved, but at the cost of her national independence; henceforth she became a vassal of the Assyrian king. During the remainder of his reign Ahaz seems to have continued loyal to Assyria.

The Reign of Hezekiah. During the early years of Hezekiah Judah kept out of difficulties by quietly paying tribute. The fall of Samaria in 722–721 made an impression that was not soon forgotten, and this im-

pression became intensified when in 720 Sargon II, king of Assyria, defeated an Egyptian army near Raphia, on the borders of Egypt. Nevertheless, the states along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean bore impatiently the Assyrian yoke. As early as 711 Judah came near being involved in a revolt against Sargon. The death of the latter in 705 was the signal for uprisings throughout the empire. Merodach-baladan made himself again king of Babylon, and he succeeded in stirring up rebellion in the west, in which Judah joined. Sennacherib, the successor of Sargon, was compelled to spend several years in the east, in order to quell disturbances there; but in 702–701 he marched westward. Tyre, Sidon, and other states fell before him, Judah was overrun (2 Kings 18. 13), Hezekiah was shut up in Jerusalem "like a bird in a cage," and the fall of the city was confidently expected. It was at this point that a Divine Providence compelled Sennacherib to raise the siege of the city and return to Nineveh. Jerusalem was saved. Little more is known of events in the reign of Hezekiah; even the year of his death is uncertain; he died sometime between 697 and 686 B. C.

MORAL, SOCIAL, AND RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS

Moral and Social Conditions. Socially and morally Judah presented a dark picture during the latter part of the eighth century. Conditions are pictured most vividly in the prophecies of Isaiah and Micah, the Book of Kings dealing almost exclusively with political events. Of the two prophets Isaiah views the situation from the standpoint of the patrician, Micah from that of the humble peasant of the country.

A vivid description of moral and social conditions is found in the fifth chapter of Isaiah. After a general denunciation, by means of a parable, of evil and wrong-doing, the prophet proceeds to point out in detail the most heinous crimes (8–24). Foremost among the social evils was the greed of the nobles, manifesting itself in the attempts to build up large estates by forcibly ejecting the smaller property holders (compare also Mic. 2. 1, 2). The judges were quite willing to assist their powerful friends in robbing the weak (Mic. 3. 11); the poor widows and orphans, who were without defenders, were cruelly robbed and plundered, and even sold into slavery (Mic. 2. 9; Isa. 1. 23; 5. 23). The common people were oppressed by excessive taxation, that the magnificent palaces of the capital might be erected (Mic. 3. 10). Every man's hand seems to have been against his neighbor; even the most sacred relations of life were disregarded (Mic. 7. 5, 6; Isa. 3. 1ff.).

Responsibility of the Nobles. The nobles were chiefly to blame for the awful social and moral corruption. Micah describes them as cannibals "who tear the flesh of the people from their bones and devour it" (3. 2, 3). Isaiah does not spare them: "They that lead Judah cause them to err, the spoil of the poor is in their houses; they crush my people. . . . The princes are companions of thieves, every one loveth bribes and chaseth after fees, but hath no regard for the cause of the widow and of the fatherless" (3. 12–15; 1. 23). The greed and rapacity of the nobles knew no limits; like highway robbers they pounced upon passers-by and stripped off their garments (Mic. 2. 8); helpless women and children were their special prey. Under the guise of the law decisions were given in favor of the one

offering the largest bribe. The moral and social conditions in Judah at this time could hardly have been worse.

Religious Conditions. The pictures of the religious life drawn by the two prophets are equally dark. Religion had become a matter of form. Ceremonial observances were thought to meet all religious requirements, and, as in Israel, the misapprehension was widespread that, as long as the external acts of worship were scrupulously performed, the people were entitled to the divine favor and protection. "Jehovah the God of hosts is with us" was the favorite watchword; and the false notion implied in it seems to have found encouragement even among the religious leaders (Mic. 3. 11). In addition to this perverted Jehovah worship idolatry was quite common (Isa. 2. 8). Ahaz sought to please his Assyrian master by introducing foreign elements into the temple worship (2 Kings 16. 10ff.). Hezekiah, it is true, sought to bring about a religious reformation, but it was hardly as sweeping as 2 Kings 18. 4 would seem, at first sight, to indicate, for in the days of Josiah, about a century later, there were still found undisturbed high places reared by Solomon in or near Jerusalem (2 Kings 23. 13).

THE PROPHET ISAIAH

Isaiah a King Among Prophets. Amid the conditions described the task of a prophet of Jehovah was not an easy one. But when the need is greatest God is nearest; and in every crisis in Hebrew history he raised up a man or men capable of coping with its problems and perplexities. The eighth century crisis in Judah brought to the front Isaiah, who, after Moses,

was the greatest prophet of the Hebrews. The personality of Isaiah was such as to fit him for the mighty tasks before him. He was not a "pale-faced ascetic or a shrinking sentimentalist," he was a full-blooded man, a man of high mettle, who found it quite consistent with lowliness to pour contempt upon a weak, vacillating king, to fling burning scorn against mocking skeptics, to denounce falsehood and deceit with words that scorched and blistered. His one outstanding characteristic was strength—strength of character, strength born of intense convictions and of strong and lofty motives. Very truthfully says Ewald: "Of the other prophets all the more celebrated ones were distinguished by some special excellence and peculiar power, whether of speech or of deed; in Isaiah all the powers and all the beauties of prophetic speech and deed combine to form a symmetrical whole; he is distinguished less by any special excellence than by the symmetry and perfection of all his powers. . . . There are rarely combined in one individual the profoundest prophetic emotion and purest feeling, the most unwearied, successful, and consistent activity amid all the confusions and changes of life, and, lastly, true poetic ease and beauty of style combined with force and irresistible power; yet this triad of powers we find realized in Isaiah as in no other prophet." Isaiah is indeed a king among the prophets.

The Personal Life of Isaiah. Little is known of Isaiah's early life. His father was Amoz, who, according to an ancient Jewish tradition, was the brother of Amaziah, king of Judah, which would make Isaiah a cousin of Uzziah. Other reasons for believing Isaiah to have been of royal descent have been seen in his familiar-

ity with the successive monarchs of Judah and in the presence of the element Yahweh (Jehovah) in his name, which in the earlier periods seems to have been confined to royal names; but the evidence cannot be considered conclusive. However, his whole conduct and bearing make it certain that he was of high social rank; in which respect he differs from his contemporary Micah, who was a simple peasant.

The place of Isaiah's birth is not given; his residence seems to have been in the capital city Jerusalem, which is the center of all his thought and affection. He did not live apart from the world, but mingled freely with men, high and low, and was a keen observer of life about him. As has been indicated, he sustained close relations to the kings of his day, and was just as bold and fearless in denouncing them as he was in addressing the common people.

The Prophet's Family. Isaiah had a family. His wife is called a prophetess (8. 3). Two sons are mentioned, to whom he gave names symbolic of some aspects of the nation's history which he touched upon in his message—Shear-jashub, which means, "a remnant shall return," and Maher-shalal-hash-baz, that is, "spoil speedeth, booty hasteth."

The Last Days of Isaiah. About the last days of Isaiah we know nothing. A Jewish tradition says that he was slain by Manasseh. The apocryphal book called "Ascension of Isaiah" affirms that the prophet was sawn asunder; which statement is found also in Justin Martyr and may underlie Heb. 11. 37.

Date of Isaiah's Activity. Isaiah's ministry began in the year in which King Uzziah died (6. 1), that is, some time between 740 and 736. It seems to have ended

about the time of the sudden deliverance of Jerusalem from Sennacherib in 701. He may have prophesied some years later, but none of the utterances coming from him can be assigned with certainty to a later date. If Isaiah was born about 760, as is not improbable, he was a child when Amos appeared at Beth-el, and Hosea was still active when he began his prophetic career. It is not unlikely, therefore, that he was acquainted with the activities of these two prophets of Israel.

THE MESSAGE OF ISAIAH

Principal Divisions of the Book of Isaiah. The Book of Isaiah may be divided into seven portions of unequal length: I. Chapters 1–12, Prophecies concerning Judah and Israel coming from different periods of Isaiah's activity; II. Chapters 13–23, Prophecies concerning foreign nations; III. Chapters 24–27, Picture of a great world judgment, from which the people of Jehovah will escape; IV. Chapters 28–33, Group of discourses having for their subject chiefly the relations of Judah with Egypt and Assyria; V. Chapters 34, 35, Contrast between the destiny of Israel and that of Edom; VI. Chapters 36–39, An historical section, dealing chiefly with the activity of Isaiah during the reign of Hezekiah; VII. Chapters 40–66, The restoration of Judah from exile.

Integrity of the Book. Modern scholars are quite generally agreed in assigning sections III, V, and VII to a date later than that of Isaiah, the son of Amoz. Section VI, which is found with some variations in 2 Kings 18ff., is thought by many to have been written subsequently to the time of Isaiah, and there are several other chapters, for example, 13. 1—14. 23; 21; 33, that

are looked upon with suspicion; but even if the arguments against all these sections were conclusive, Isaiah would still remain the greatest of the prophets; and from the utterances which may be assigned to him with a feeling of absolute assurance it is not difficult to form an adequate view of his work and teaching.

Chronological Arrangement of the Prophecies. The arrangement of the separate utterances in the book is not chronological, but the historical allusions are definite enough to enable one to assign most of the prophecies to definite dates, though in a few cases an element of uncertainty may remain:

1. To the period before the Syro-Ephraimitic crisis in 735–734 seem to belong, 2. 2—4. 6; 5. 1–24; 6; 9. 8—10. 4; 5. 25–30.
2. In connection with that crisis were delivered, 7. 1—9. 7; 17. 1–11.
3. In connection with the fall of Samaria, 28. 1–4.
4. In connection with Sargon's invasion in 711, chapter 20.
5. In connection with Sennacherib's invasion and the events leading up to it, 1; 10. 5–34; 11. 1–9; 14. 24–32; 18; 22; 23; 28; 29; 30; 31.
6. Of uncertain date, though probably coming from Isaiah, 15; 16; 17. 12–14; 19; 32.

The Great Arraignment, Chapter 1. Chapter 1 owes its present position to the comprehensiveness of its contents, for it contains in brief form all the essential elements of Isaiah's teaching. The utterance, which stands by itself, has been aptly described by Ewald as "The great arraignment." Jehovah is the plaintiff, Judah the defendant, the prophet an interested by-stander and go-between. The chapter falls

naturally into two divisions. The first (2–20) calls attention to the moral and religious issues involved in the dispute between Jehovah and the people. Jehovah has chosen Israel and exalted it above all other nations, but it has basely rebelled against its Lord, and is even now suffering the consequences of its folly (2–9). The prophet assumes that the denunciation is resented by his hearers, who accuse him of unfairness, because he takes no notice of the care with which they observe the external forms of religion. He replies by saying that they are seeking Jehovah by the wrong means: the whole ceremonial system as practiced by them, sacrifices, feast days, and even prayers, are an abomination to Jehovah (10–15). On the other hand, moral reformation and a righteous life, the only service acceptable to God, are neglected by them (16, 17); hence they stand before Jehovah as condemned criminals. Nevertheless he is still merciful; if they show themselves worthy he is ready to pardon (18), and if henceforth they will live an obedient life prosperity will be their portion (19); but if they continue in rebellion death and destruction will overtake them (20).

The prophet seems convinced that the proposition will not be accepted; at any rate, he immediately proceeds to announce the judgment which is now inevitable. However, the judgment is not for the purpose of annihilation, but of discipline: it will result in the purification of those who are still sensitive to the divine mercy and in the destruction of the obstinate. The announcement of judgment opens with a dirge over the moral decay of Jerusalem. At one time righteousness had her home there, but now it is filled with assassins. The ruling classes are utterly corrupt—what can be ex-

pected of the others (21–23)? Judgment will surely come (24, 25), to result in the restoration of Zion to her former purity (26, 27) and in the destruction of those who persist in rebellion (28). When the awful blow falls the nothingness of the idols will be revealed (29–31).

The Realization of the Glories of the Messianic Age after a Period of Judgment, Chapters 2–4. Chapters 2–4 form a separate collection, which contains (1) an introduction (2. 2–4), describing the glory of Zion as the center of the universal kingdom of God; (2) a series of discourses (2. 5—4. 1), in which the prophet attacks the evils and vices of the present and announces judgment upon all; and (3) a conclusion (4. 2–6), which sets forth the disciplinary effects of the judgment: the ideal set forth in 2. 2–4 will be realized.

The Glories of the Messianic Age, the Present Corruption, and the Inevitable Judgment, Chapter 2. We have, then, first of all, a sublime picture of the glories of the Messianic age (2. 2–4). According to this ideal picture Judah is to be the spiritual teacher of the nations, but it cannot carry out this commission as long as it remains in its present spiritual condition. Therefore the prophet appeals to the people: If the ideal picture is ever to be realized it is high time that a beginning should be made; and if no one else does it, let us Jews at least follow the instruction of Jehovah (5). But suddenly he thinks of the hopeless condition of the people and cries out in despair: What is the use even to try, for thou hast already cast off the people, and not without reason; indeed, their rejection is inevitable in view of their rebellion against Jehovah, as seen (1) in the use of divination; (2) in their greed and luxurious living; (3) in their trust in human defenses; (4) in the

practice of idolatry (6–8). Jehovah must vindicate his majesty in order to bring man to his senses (9–11). This he will do by sending a terrible judgment, that will destroy the handiwork of God and man (12–16). Then Jehovah alone will be exalted while man will be humiliated, and the idols will be swept away (17–22).

The Judgment upon Judah, 3. 1–15. From the general judgment the prophet turns to a more specific judgment upon Judah, which will result in the dissolution of all social order (3. 1–7). The blow is due to the people's attitude of defiance toward Jehovah, and the incompetence and injustice of the rulers (8–12). In verses 13–15 the prophet portrays a judgment scene. Jehovah, at once accuser and judge, comes to vindicate the cause of the poor against the oppressors.

Judgment upon the Wanton Women of Jerusalem, 3. 16—4. 1. In 3. 16—4. 1 a crushing attack is made upon the wanton women of Jerusalem. Like Amos, Isaiah is convinced that the self-indulgence and luxury of the women is one cause of the extortion practiced by their husbands; therefore they must share in the judgment.

Blessings in Store for the Redeemed Remnant, 4. 2–6. Out of the judgment a remnant will escape which will enjoy forever the favor and blessing of God. The future glory is presented under three aspects: (1) extraordinary fertility of the soil (2); (2) purification from all uncleanness (3, 4); (3) the presence of Jehovah himself and the accompanying benefits (5, 6).

The Corruption of the People and the Inevitable Doom, Chapter 5. Chapter 5 deals with the same subjects as chapters 2–4, the corruption of people and rulers and the inevitable doom. The chapter falls naturally into three parts: 1. The parable of the vineyard, which sets

forth the glaring ingratitude of Israel and its rejection by Jehovah (1–7). 2. An exposition of the parable in the form of six woes, (1) upon the greedy nobles who rob the poor of their property, so that only a few retain residential rights (8–10); (2) upon those who spend their time in dissipation and as a result lose all spiritual perception (11–17); (3) upon the mocking skeptics who do not heed the prophetic warnings and recklessly increase their guilt (18, 19); (4) upon the morally perverse who set aside all moral standards (20); (5) upon the self-conceited who think that they do not need the wisdom of Jehovah (21); (6) upon the dissolute and corrupt judges (23). This awful condition of affairs demands speedy judgment (24). 3. Jehovah will send a powerful army that will utterly destroy land and people (25–30).

The Vision of Isaiah, Chapter 6. Chapter 6 contains an account of the inaugural vision of Isaiah, placed in its present position as an introduction to 7. 1—9. 7, to add weight to the contents of these chapters. In the death year of King Uzziah Isaiah passed through a great spiritual crisis which prepared him for his prophetic ministry and impressed upon him certain truths which determined the character of all his prophetic utterances. One day, while Isaiah was worshiping in the temple, meditating perhaps upon the character of Jehovah and the disloyalty of his contemporaries, he had a vision of Jehovah in all his splendor. sitting upon a throne, surrounded by his heavenly courtiers, who were singing his praises, giving special emphasis to the divine holiness and its glorious manifestation in all the earth (1–4). He becomes conscious of his own uncleanness and of that of

his people, but immediately he is cleansed; whereupon he hears the divine voice calling for some one to prophesy to the people; Isaiah volunteers and receives the commission (5–8). At the same time he is assured that the effects of his preaching will be disappointing; it will result in increasing blindness and stubbornness (9, 10). This will bring severe judgment from Jehovah, out of which only a small remnant will escape (11–13).

Isaiah's Advice to Ahaz during the Syro-Ephraimitic Crisis, Chapter 7. The prophecies in 7. 1—9. 7, which are closely connected, portray the working out in history of the latter part of Isaiah's vision: in the first place, the hardening of the hearts of the people; secondly, the setting apart of a holy seed out of which might grow a new kingdom of God. Chapter 7. 1–3 introduces us to the Syro-Ephraimitic crisis. The combined armies were approaching; Ahaz and the people were in consternation; an appeal to Tiglath-pileser of Assyria seemed the only way of escape (1, 2). To allay the fears of Ahaz was the purpose of Isaiah's interview. The prophet can see no cause for alarm, for the hostile armies are about to be extinguished by Assyria (3, 4). Besides, Jehovah has an interest in the struggle, and he will stand by Ahaz if the king will only have faith (5–9). To overcome the king's doubts Isaiah offers him a sign, which he refuses (10–12). Whereupon the prophet announces that Jehovah will give him a sign to prove the divine power, which will show itself, first, in the driving away of the enemy, and then in a severe judgment upon Judah (13–17). There follow four pictures of the devastation wrought by the hostile army: 1. Flies and bees (18, 19); 2. The hired razor (20); 3. The population will be reduced to the pas-

toral life of the desert (21, 22); 4. The most costly vineyards will be overrun by thorns and thistles (23–25).

Isaiah's Appeal to the People and His Rejection, 8. 1–15. When Ahaz rejected the advice of Isaiah, the prophet turned to the people with the same message. The first few verses of chapter 8 are only a repetition of the announcement made to Ahaz in 7. 14–17. At first the prophet promises deliverance; this he does by the twofold sign of *Maher-shalal-hash-baz* (1–4). But he immediately follows with the threat that the Assyrian will overrun Judah (5–8a). Nevertheless, Judah will not be entirely destroyed, for Jehovah will come to the rescue and frustrate all schemes directed against the rule of Jehovah on Mount Zion (8b–10). To gain the hearing of the people Isaiah declares that the only reason why he sets himself against the policy of the king and the opinion of the people is the fact that he is under divine direction (11–15).

Isaiah and His Disciples, the Imminent Doom and Future Glory, 8. 16—9. 7. When the prophet failed to make an impression on the people, he turned from them and retired within the circle of his immediate followers. To them he commits a record of the prophecies delivered before king and people and prepares them by further instruction for a more auspicious time when they might take up the work afresh. Isaiah considers his name and the names of his two sons pledges of the divine faithfulness, intended for the unbelieving people (16–18). In preparing his disciples for the future he pictures to them the darkness and despair of the days to come. There will be spiritual darkness, when the people will resort to the black arts for guidance

(19, 20), and outward distress, when men will roam through a dreary land, maddened by hunger, and seeking relief in vain (21, 22).

But a brighter day will come, and the districts that suffered most will experience the greater joy (9. 1). The light and joy of a great deliverance will break upon the people, the Assyrian will be overthrown, every vestige of war will disappear, and finally the Messianic king will set up his reign of righteousness and peace (2–7).

Israel's Rebellion and Punishments, 9. 8—10. 4. The next section, 9. 8—10. 4, to which may have belonged at one time 5. 25–30, contains a series of prophecies directed against the northern kingdom. Down to 9. 21 (+5. 25) we have a retrospect of historical judgments, by which Jehovah has sought to bring the people to repentance, but in vain; hence a final blow will fall (5. 25–30). The utterance in 10. 1–4 is in the nature of a woe.

After a statement as to why and upon whom the judgments have fallen (8. 8–10) the prophet describes the first judgment, the aggressions of Israel's powerful neighbors in the east and west (11, 12). Since the people continued in rebellion a second blow came in the form of some sudden catastrophe by which the state was robbed of its leaders. The people were so corrupt that Jehovah felt compelled to withdraw his compassion even from the helpless widows and orphans (13–17). There followed, as the third judgment, a state of anarchy and civil strife (18–21). In 10. 1–4 follows a woe upon the maladministrators of justice. The unjust judges will receive their dues in some day of slaughter.

The Arrogance of the Assyrians and their Overthrow.

10. 5–34. The rest of chapter 10 contains the first oracle aimed directly against Assyria. Isaiah believed that Judah deserved punishment and that Assyria was appointed to execute it, but he also believed that the Assyrians had gone beyond Jehovah's purpose. Here he even declares that they do not recognize at all the sway of Israel's God; they glory in their own wisdom and strength, by which they claim to have achieved past successes, and proudly they boast that Jerusalem will soon fall before them (5–11, 13, 14). Jehovah will vindicate his supremacy by overthrowing the proud Assyrian power (12, 15–19). This decisive manifestation of Jehovah's power will result in the conversion of a remnant of Judah (20–23). After another message of comfort to the troubled people (24–27), the prophet describes ideally the enemy's march from the northern frontier to the gates of Jerusalem, where he will be annihilated just as the goal of his ambition seems to be within reach (28–34).

The Messianic Kingdom and the Joy of the Redeemed, Chapters 11, 12. The overthrow of Assyria will prepare the way for the setting up of the Messianic kingdom. The prophet announces the advent of the Messianic king, describes his person and character, and praises his just administration (11. 1–5). The result of his reign will be the restoration of the peace of paradise, affecting both man and beast, and the universal spread of righteousness and the knowledge of Jehovah (6–9). The influence proceeding from the new religion will attract the nations of the earth (10); the dispersed Jews will be gathered from the ends of the earth, and the united north and south will subdue the neighboring nations (11–16). The returning exiles will

celebrate the glorious deliverance with joyous songs of praise, because the anger of Jehovah is now turned away, and expressions of confidence for the future (12. 1, 2). In verse 3 the prophet assures the people that Jehovah will always be near them to supply their every need. Whereupon the members of the redeemed community exhort one another to declare Jehovah's praises to the world (4–6).

The Downfall of Babylon, 13. 1—14. 23. With chapter 13 begins the second main division of the Book of Isaiah, consisting of prophecies against various nations that came into hostile contact with Israel and Judah. The first utterance, 13. 1—14. 23, deals with the downfall of Babylon. The historical background is that of the exile. The Jews are represented as held captive by the Babylonians, but the capture of Babylon is imminent, when the exiles will be released. Chapter 13. 2–22 describes the downfall of Babylon and the events leading up to it. The nations appointed to execute judgment upon the cruel city are gathered upon the mountains (2–4), and they spread terror everywhere (5–8). Amid convulsions of nature the city will be attacked and taken; some will flee, but the majority of the population, old and young, will be cruelly massacred (9–16). The Medes are the executioners of the awful judgment upon Babylon (17–19), which will remain under a curse forever, deserted by man and inhabited only by desert animals (20–22). The immediate result of the destruction of Babylon will be the release of the exiled Jews and their restoration to felicity in their own land (14. 1–4). This promise is followed by a song of triumph over the downfall of the Babylonian king. The whole earth rejoices that the oppressor

is gone (4b–8); but Sheol is disturbed when his arrival there becomes known (9–11). The prophet reflects upon the fate of the fallen king. Never would the thought of being cast into Sheol have entered the mind of the proud monarch (12–15). Suddenly the prophet transports the reader from Sheol to the battlefield, where the dead king lies, exposed to the derision of men who glory in his downfall (16–19). The lack of proper burial and the extermination of his family are the severest judgments which can befall him, according to Oriental ideas (20, 21). The oracle closes with a reassertion of the speedy overthrow of Babylon (22, 23).

The Overthrow of the Assyrians, 14. 24–32. The prophecy against Babylon is followed by two independent oracles belonging to a different historical situation: one announcing the overthrow of the Assyrians during an invasion of Palestine (24–27), the other threatening Philistia with a serious calamity proceeding from the north (28–32).

An Oracle against Moab, Chapters 15, 16. Chapters 15, 16 contain an oracle against Moab. The greater part of the utterance seems descriptive of a great calamity that has already befallen Moab. In one night the chief cities of Moab have been laid waste (15. 1); the distressed survivors crowd the sanctuaries (2–4); finally they are compelled to leave the land to find refuge in Edom (5–8); and still greater troubles are awaiting Moab (9). The Moabites send presents to Jerusalem and appeal for help, but their appeal is not heeded (16. 1–5). No matter how much the author may wish to see the calamity averted there is no relief; it must run its course (6–12). Thus far the original prophecy spoken "in time past" (13) seems to go. Isaiah takes it up

and announces that it will surely be fulfilled in a few years (14).

Speedy Overthrow of Damascus, Israel, and an Unnamed Foe, Chapter 17. Chapter 17. 1–11 contains an announcement of the speedy overthrow of Damascus and Israel (compare chapters 7 and 8). Damascus and Israel shall surely fall (1–6); this manifestation of the divine power will lead to a return of many to Jehovah (7, 8). The apostasy of Israel is responsible for its overthrow (9–11). Verses 12–14 are an oracle announcing the sudden destruction of "many peoples," perhaps the Assyrians, as they advance against the people of Jehovah.

Reply to Ambassadors of Ethiopia, Chapter 18. Chapter 18 is somewhat obscure. It seems to contain the prophet's reply to Ethiopian ambassadors who came to induce the king of Judah to join Ethiopia in an attack upon Assyria. The prophet tells the ambassadors to return, for Jehovah has already decreed the downfall of Assyria (1–6). When the Ethiopians see the humiliation of Assyria they will do homage to the God of Israel (7).

The Burden of Egypt, Chapter 19. Chapter 19 is entitled "The burden of Egypt." Jehovah will execute a terrible judgment upon Egypt. Anarchy and social disorder will distress the land; sorcery will be appealed to, but no relief will come; finally a "fierce ruler" will oppress the people (1–4). The Nile will dry up, agriculture will cease, and other industries will be paralyzed (5–10). The traditional wisdom of Egypt will fail, and the nation will stagger "as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit" (11–15). When the Egyptians discover that Jehovah is the cause of all these calamities they will

be filled with terror (16, 17), and in the end a complete change will take place in their attitude toward Jehovah and Israel. The language of the Jews will be spoken in Egypt (18), the worship of Jehovah will be established there (19–22), and peaceful intercourse will begin between Israel and Egypt in the southwest and Assyria in the east, until all three will become the people of Jehovah (23–25).

Symbolic Act Illustrating the Success of Sargon in Palestine, Chapter 20. Chapter 20 contains the interpretation of a symbolic act performed by Isaiah. In the year in which the army of Sargon besieged Ashdod, that is, in 711, there was a party in Judah urging an alliance with Egypt and Ethiopia against Assyria. The symbolic act is to warn King Hezekiah against the alliance, for the success of Assyria is assured.

Oracles against Babylon and Arabia, Chapter 21. In chapter 21. 1–10 is another oracle against Babylon. The prophet sees a siege of the city (1, 2). At first he is agitated and appalled (3, 4). For a time he is uncertain as to the outcome, but finally he beholds the fall of the city (5–9), which he makes known to the people (10). Verses 11, 12 contain an oracle, put in enigmatic language, concerning Edom, and 13–17 predict an invasion and destruction of Arabia.

Condemnation of the People's Conduct, 22. 1–14. Chapter 22. 1–14 is a condemnation of the people's conduct during an attack upon the capital city. They give themselves to wild rejoicing, while the occasion demands grief and mourning (1–3). The prophet is filled with shame (4, 5), and tries to show to the people that their relief was not due to measures of defense, but to a divine providence; hence the present is not a time

for thoughtless revelry, but for serious reflection and penitence (6–13). Jehovah will hold them to account for their disregard of him (14).

Denunciation of Shebna, 22. 15–25. The rest of chapter 22 deals with a prominent politician in Jerusalem. Shebna, an official in the royal palace, is denounced by Isaiah and threatened with deposition and banishment (15–19); Eliakim is nominated as his successor (20–25).

Prophecy against Tyre and Sidon, Chapter 23. The prophecy in chapter 23 is directed against Tyre and Sidon, the chief representatives of Phœnician power and civilization. The ships of Tarshish, homeward bound, are summoned to wail over the downfall of the Phœnician cities (1–5), and the inhabitants of the coast are ironically urged to seek refuge beyond the sea (6, 7). The present calamity is decreed by Jehovah, who is determined to destroy the Phœnicians and will pursue them even beyond the sea (10–14). After the lapse of seventy years Tyre will be restored and converted to Jehovah (15–18).

A Great World Judgment, Chapters 24–27. Chapters 24–27 form a distinct section of the Book of Isaiah, coming probably from the postexilic period. They portray in vivid colors a great world judgment and the escape of God's faithful people from its terrors.

Imminence and Severity of the Judgment, Chapter 24. A world judgment is about to be executed (24. 1–3), on account of the wickedness of men (4–6); joy will vanish from the earth; everywhere will be lamentation (7–9); even "the city" is left desolate (10–12); only a small remnant will escape (13). The prophet hears rejoicing over the dawn of a better day, but he de-

clares it to be premature (14–16a), and portrays once more in vivid colors the imminent judgment (16b–23).

Hymns of Thanksgiving and the Blessedness of the Messianic Age, Chapter 25. Chapter 25 falls naturally into three divisions. Verses 1–5 are a hymn of thanksgiving in which the author, speaking in the name of the redeemed community, praises God for the overthrow of the enemy and the mercy vouchsafed to his people. Verses 6–8 picture the blessedness of the Messianic age. This is followed by another hymn of thanksgiving praising God for the deliverance of his people (9) and the complete destruction of Moab (10–12).

Song of Praise for Jehovah's Wonderful Deliverance, 26. 1–19. Chapter 26. 1–19 is another song of praise: Jehovah has been the salvation of his city and has caused the downfall of the hostile power (1–6); judgment alone can teach righteousness to the nations, mercy only hardens them (7–10). Remembering the past mercies of Jehovah, the author prays for new blessings, the overthrow of the enemies and peace for Israel (11–15). The dark experiences of Israel in the past have not been without wholesome effects, but the crisis is by no means over. One of the most perplexing problems seems to have been the scantiness of the population (16–18); therefore Jehovah will increase the numbers by a resurrection of the dead members of the community (19).

The Salvation of the People of Jehovah, 26. 20—27. 13. Chapter 26. 20 is the continuation of 25. 8, from which it is separated by the lyrical sections. The people of Jehovah are bidden to hide "until the indignation be overpast" (20, 21); for Jehovah will execute a terrible judgment (27. 1). Another poem pictures Jehovah's

satisfaction with his vineyard and permanent interest in its welfare (2–6). The people are summoned to heed the lessons taught by the calamities of the past, else greater disaster may befall them (7–11); but if they return to Jehovah he will restore to them his favor and bring back the exiles from the ends of the earth (12, 13).

The Relation of Judah to Egypt and Assyria, Chapters 28–32. Chapters 28–32 contain a series of utterances delivered during the years between the accession of Sennacherib in 705 and the deliverance of Jerusalem in 701. Chapter 28. 1–4 was probably delivered originally before the fall of Samaria, but may have been repeated by Isaiah at the later time.

The Imminent Judgment and its Disciplinary Value, Chapter 28. The section begins with a woe upon the drunkards of Samaria and an announcement of the doom of the city (28. 1–6). The prophet beholds similar dissipation in Jerusalem, accompanied by an unwillingness to listen to his counsel. The people trust in human covenants and defenses rather than in Jehovah, but they will find in the end that their policy leads to destruction (7–22). There follow two parables addressed, perhaps, to Isaiah's disciples, to set forth the divine purpose in disciplining his people. Just as the farmer must prepare the field for the reception of the grain by plowing, so Jehovah must plow his people by judgment before they become receptive to his teaching (23–26). Threshing is not bruising; it is necessary to secure the grain, and the method is adapted to the material: so judgment is not simply a process of causing pain; it serves a higher end, and it also is adapted to the material with which God has to deal (27–29).

No Escape from the Divine Judgment, which will Bring the People to their Senses, Chapter 29. Jerusalem is about to be besieged by a mighty enemy (29. 1–4), but suddenly Jehovah will appear and cause the enemies to vanish (5–8). The people listen to the words of the prophet with incredulity, and he tells them that their want of spiritual perception is the result of the divine wrath (9–12). They have an entirely false idea of the character of Jehovah and his requirements, therefore he must do startling things, such as have been announced (13, 14). The prophet pronounces another woe, this time upon the politicians who secretly enter into conspiracy with Egypt; their schemes are contrary to the divine purpose and therefore are bound to fail (15, 16). The prophecy closes with a picture of the ideal future when the people will heed the word of Jehovah (17–19), when oppression and mockery will cease (20, 21), and the redeemed remnant will serve Jehovah alone (22–24).

Failure of an Alliance with Egypt; Dawn of the Messianic Era, Chapter 30. Chapter 30 opens with a woe upon the "rebellious children" who have sent an embassy to conclude a treaty with Egypt. It will avail nothing, for Egypt invariably disappoints those trusting in her (1–7). The proposed treaty is the crowning evidence of their rebellion against Jehovah and their unwillingness to listen to his representatives (8–11); therefore they shall be broken to pieces like a potter's vessel (12–14). Their only salvation is in reliance upon Jehovah, but having rejected him their doom is sealed (15–17). On the other hand, the faithful will enjoy the divine favor (18, 19); they will have divinely appointed teachers (20, 21), idolatry will

cease (22), and nature will be completely transformed (23–26). The era of prosperity will be inaugurated by the destruction of Assyria (27–33).

Jehovah the Determiner of Jerusalem's Destiny, Chapter 31. The thoughts expressed in chapter 30 are reiterated in 31. 1—32. 8. The alliance with Egypt will avail nothing (31. 1–3); the fate of Jerusalem is in Jehovah's hand; he alone can destroy or save (4, 5); the character of the people will be transformed (6, 7); and the Assyrian will be overthrown (8, 9).

The Messianic King and His Kingdom; the Impending Doom; the Divine Mercy, Chapter 32. The Assyrian overthrown, the ideal kingdom of God will be set up under an ideal king and ideal officials; individuals and society will be regenerated (32. 1–8). The rest of chapter 32 is addressed to the women of Jerusalem who, by their unconcern and indifference, have aroused the wrath of the prophet (9). Trouble is impending, therefore they would better wail and lament (10–12). The desolation will spread everywhere (13, 14) until the divine spirit is poured out, which will alter the appearance of nature and transform the character of the inhabitants (15–20).

Woe upon an Unnamed Oppressor; the Glory of the Messianic Age, Chapter 33. The woe with which chapter 33 opens is addressed to an unnamed oppressor. If the prophecy comes from Isaiah, he is probably the Assyrian. Jehovah, who has shown an interest in Jerusalem in days gone by, will speedily disperse the troublers of his people (1–6). At present the land may be in distress and mourn bitterly (7–9), but Jehovah is about to arise and scatter the enemy (10–12). When the divine manifestation is seen the

ungodly in Jerusalem will tremble (13, 14), but the righteous will dwell securely with Jehovah (15, 16). The prophecy concludes with a picture of the future glory. The king will appear in his beauty (17), the present danger will be a thing of the past (18, 19), and Jerusalem will dwell in security and prosperity under the rule of Jehovah (20–23); sickness will disappear and pardon will be granted to all (24).

Contrast between the Destiny of Edom and that of Israel, Chapters 34, 35. In chapters 34, 35, which are quite generally assigned to a postexilic date, the future of Edom is contrasted with that of Israel. Edom will be humiliated, Israel will be raised to glory. Chapter 34 opens with a vivid description of the terrors of a world judgment (1–4). Edom, which has shown special hostility against the people of Jehovah, will suffer most. Its population will be slaughtered (5–8) and the land will become desolate, the haunt of desert animals forever (9–17).

Far different will be the lot of Israel. The soil of its land will be blessed with extraordinary fertility (35. 1, 2); human infirmities of every sort will disappear and all needs will be abundantly supplied (3–7); a highway will be built, over which the exiles may safely return to Zion, there to live in the presence of their God in joy and felicity forever (8–10).

Isaiah's Activity during the Reign of Hezekiah, Chapters 36–39. Chapters 36–39 are an historical section, found with some variations—the most important being the absence of the song of Hezekiah—in 2 Kings 18–20. The narratives are inserted here to illustrate the part played by Isaiah in one of the greatest crises in the history of Judah, the invasion of Sen-

nacherib in 701. Three important events are treated at some length: (1) the efforts of Sennacherib to obtain possession of Jerusalem; (2) Hezekiah's sickness and recovery; (3) the embassy of Merodach-baladan.

Sennacherib's Advance Against Jerusalem, and its Deliverance, Chapters 36, 37. In the fourteenth year of Hezekiah Sennacherib, king of Assyria, overran Judah (36. 1); finally he sent an army against Jerusalem (2). Representatives of Hezekiah meet the leader, who demands the surrender of the city (3–10). They urge him to speak in Aramaic, so that the people may not understand the threatening message (11); the Rabshakeh refuses and points out to the people that submission will be more advantageous than resistance (12–20). Discouraged and in despair, the messengers return to Hezekiah (21, 22), who now appeals to the prophet Isaiah for advice (37. 1–5). The messengers are sent back to the king with a message of encouragement (6, 7). The Rabshakeh returns to the headquarters of Sennacherib at Libnah (8). When a rumor reaches Sennacherib that an Egyptian army is advancing, he makes another attempt to secure possession of Jerusalem and sends a letter to Hezekiah urging submission (9–13). On receipt of the letter Hezekiah goes to the temple to pray (14–20). The answer to the prayer comes in the form of a message from Isaiah, assuring the king that Sennacherib will not be able to harm the city (21–35). The prediction is fulfilled, and Sennacherib is compelled to return to Nineveh, where he is assassinated (36–38).

Hezekiah's Sickness and Recovery, Chapter 38. Chapter 38 records Hezekiah's sickness and recovery. Hezekiah, sick unto death (1), prays that his life may

be spared (2, 3). The petition is granted, and fifteen years are added to his life (4–8); whereupon Hezekiah utters a song of thanksgiving for his recovery (9–20). Verses 20, 21 seem to be out of place; the former mentions the prophet's prescription for the malady of the king; the latter, the desire of Hezekiah for a sign that the words of the prophet will be fulfilled.

The Embassy of Merodach-baladan and Isaiah's Threat, Chapter 39. Merodach-baladan sends an embassy to Hezekiah, apparently to congratulate him on his recovery (39. 1). Hezekiah receives it gladly and shows the men all his resources (2). Isaiah comes to the court to find out the purpose of the embassy (3). When told that the king has shown the ambassadors all his resources (4), he announces a future exile to the land from which the embassy has come (5–7). Hezekiah expresses his satisfaction that the calamity is not to come during his reign (8).

THE WORK AND TEACHING OF ISAIAH

Vision of the Divine Holiness. The key to Isaiah's activity may be found in his inaugural vision, an account of which is contained in the sixth chapter. During this vision Isaiah saw Jehovah as a God of infinite holiness and glorious majesty. Amos emphasized the righteousness of Jehovah, Hosea his loving-kindness; Isaiah saw the source of these qualities in the divine holiness; righteousness, loving-kindness, and all other divine qualities, being simply the expressions of the inner holiness, which was, so to speak, the heart of the Godhead. Isaiah's conception of the holiness of Jehovah is admirably expressed in the words of Kirkpatrick: "Primarily the Hebrew root from which the

word is derived seems to denote separation. It represents God as distinct from man, separate from the creation which he called into existence. Then, since limit is the necessary condition of created things, and imperfection and sinfulness are the marks of humanity in its fallen state, the term grows to denote the separation of God from all that is limited, imperfect, and sinful. But it does not rest here in a merely negative conception. It expands so as to include the whole essential nature of God in its moral aspect. . . . His purity and his righteousness, his faithfulness and his truth, his mercy and his loving-kindness, nay, even his jealousy and his wrath, his zeal and his indignation—these are the different rays which combine to make up his holiness."

Isaiah's Conception of the Divine Majesty. Holiness is the basis of the divine majesty. To Isaiah Jehovah alone was holy, which meant to him that he alone was God in the true sense of the term. But if so, he was supreme Lord over all and exercised his sovereignty everywhere. This is the meaning of the song of the seraphim, "The whole earth is full of his glory," that is, of his glorious manifestation. "The whole earth is full of the signs of Jehovah's sovereignty; he dwells on high exalted over all; he reigns supreme alike in the realm of nature and the sphere of human history; and the crash of kingdoms, the total dissolution of the old order of the Hebrew world, which accompanied the advance of Assyria, is to the prophet nothing else than the crowning proof of Jehovah's absolute dominion asserting itself in the abasement of all that disputes his supremacy."

Isaiah's Estimate of Himself and of His Contem-

poraries. With this sublime vision of the nature and character of Jehovah there came to the prophet a clearer vision of himself and his contemporaries, which found expression in the lament: "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips."

Principles Determining the Relation of Jehovah to Man. Another truth that impressed itself upon Isaiah at this time was that the relation of Jehovah to man was determined, on the one hand, by the divine character; on the other, by the attitude of man toward God. This recognition made prominent two aspects of the divine holiness: in the first place, love for the good; in the second, hatred for the evil and sinful. The first aspect manifested itself in Jehovah's attitude toward Isaiah, who was yet sensitive to the divine influence and apparently longed to be in a proper condition to commune with his God: his sin was removed, and he was appointed a messenger of Jehovah. The same aspect appears in the promise that a holy seed will be preserved (verse 13). The other aspect is seen in the announcement of judgment upon the stubborn people.

Contents of Isaiah's Inaugural Vision. To sum up, the truths impressed upon Isaiah in the vision are: (1) The holiness of Jehovah; (2) The majesty of Jehovah; (3) The corruption and stubbornness of his contemporaries; (4) The ethical basis of the relation of Jehovah to Israel and the world; (5) The certainty of an awful judgment; (6) The preservation of a remnant; (7) This remnant is to be the seed of a new Israel.

Significance of the Vision. The vision of Jehovah was the inspiration and dominating idea of Isaiah's

activity and teaching. It is not strange in the light of such a vision that his eyes were opened so that he saw the uncleanness of the people; nor is it strange that his standard of living for himself and his people was raised; nor is it surprising that he strove for forty years, in the face of untold obstacles, to lift the nation to the pure heights of his new ideals. With this sublime vision of God he knew no sphere of life where the presence of Jehovah might not be felt, or where the battle for righteousness might not be fought; and it was his sole ambition to fight this battle until the entire national life should be regenerated, until worship should be so pure, commerce so clean, and politics so unselfish and honest that all might be offered as a holy and acceptable service to Jehovah.

Isaiah's Manifold Interests and Activities. The broad outlook of Isaiah resulted in a variety of interests and activities. Isaiah was a patient and painstaking teacher of religious truth, a bold and fearless preacher of righteousness, a sane and courageous reformer, a keen and farseeing statesman, a large-hearted champion of the rights of the people, and a divinely enlightened seer penetrating the veil hiding the future and anticipating the glorious era when the kingdom of God, a kingdom of peace and righteousness, would be established upon earth.

Isaiah as a Teacher of Religion. As a religious teacher Isaiah sought, first of all, to impress upon the minds and hearts of his contemporaries a more adequate conception of the nature and character of Jehovah; for he, like the other prophets, was convinced that the cause of Israel's apostasy was the lack of a true knowledge of Jehovah. He agrees with his predecessors in

their religious conceptions, but he gives special emphasis to two phases of the divine character that were burned into his innermost soul during the inaugural vision, namely, the divine holiness and majesty. "Holy, holy, holy," was the cry which Isaiah heard from the lips of the adoring seraphim, and he chooses the title "The Holy One of Israel" to call attention, on the one hand, to the holiness of Jehovah; on the other, to the obligation resting upon Israel as the chosen people of Jehovah to reflect the holiness of its God in life and conduct. It has already been indicated what was the content of the divine attribute of holiness as Isaiah conceived it.

Why did Isaiah Emphasize the Divine Majesty? He was led to emphasize the divine majesty by what he saw in the nation. "Those vast estates made by dispossessing small holders from their ancestral holdings, those splendid palaces with their sumptuous banquets and riotous revels, those extravagant wardrobes and costly jewels with which the grand ladies of Jerusalem adorned themselves, those horses and chariots, those forts and towers, those fleets and armies, of which the statesmen boasted as impregnable defenses, those private chapels with their gold and silver images, those secret rites performed by cunning soothsayers from Philistia and the East, that reckless indifference to truth and right and justice which seemed compatible with the most profuse outward ceremonies of worship—what were all these but a deification of wealth and power, and selfish pleasure, and reckless ambition, an indolent defiance of the supreme majesty of Jehovah of hosts?"

Had Israel recognized the majesty of Jehovah, these

excesses would have been impossible; but now Jehovah must vindicate his character, and he will do this by a terrible manifestation of his sovereignty: "Enter into the rock, and hide thyself in the dust, from before the terror of Jehovah, and from the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be brought low, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and Jehovah alone shall be exalted in that day" (2. 10, 11). In that day he will prove to the trembling and astonished people his paramount supremacy; he will demonstrate that he is a jealous God, who can tolerate no rival, and who cannot be satisfied with a half-hearted allegiance.

This is the conception of Jehovah emphasized by Isaiah, and he believed that, if the people could be impressed strongly enough with a clear conception of the holiness and majesty of Jehovah, they would cease their rebellion, for with the knowledge there would come the power to live a life that, in a measure at least, would reflect the holiness of God.

The Service Acceptable to Jehovah. Isaiah's teaching concerning the service acceptable to Jehovah is only the reflection of his teaching concerning the divine character. To a holy God a cold, heartless, formal service, without a spirit of true devotion and the backing of a righteous life, must be an abomination. Such was the service of Israel, and Isaiah condemned it in the strongest terms (compare 1. 10–15). With Isaiah religion did not consist in the performance of certain ceremonial acts, though acts of worship might have their proper place; nor in the acceptance of a certain creed, though fixed beliefs might be of considerable importance; with him religion was primarily a matter of heart and life. Hence he was convinced that the

divine requirements had to do primarily with life and conduct, and life in all its aspects and relations.

Isaiah a Preacher of Right Living and a Social Reformer. This being the conviction of the prophet, he considered it his chief duty to assist his contemporaries toward realizing the lofty ideals of Jehovah in their own lives, in their social relations, in the national life, and in their relations with other nations. In chapters 2–5 we see how as a preacher of right living and a social reformer he endeavored to transform moral and social conditions in Judah. He knew that a people's morals have greater influence in determining its destiny than kings and armies. Therefore, when seeing himself face to face with conditions which, unless a remedy could be found, meant the certain doom of the nation (1. 21–23; 3. 12–15; 5. 8–24), he roared, with the voice of a lion, against social and moral corruption: "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field! . . . Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that tarry late into the night, till wine inflame them! . . . Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil! . . . Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! . . . Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink; which justify the wicked for a reward, and take away the innocence of the guiltless from him! . . . Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and to the writers that write perverseness!" (5. 8–24; 10. 1.) Not only did he utter general denunciations, but when he found it necessary to attack individuals he did so without fear or hesitation (22. 15ff.).

Isaiah's Social and Ethical Ideals. Isaiah was not content with denouncing the present abuses; he was equally anxious to hold before the people lofty social and moral ideals, which he constantly urged them to attain. Perhaps no better brief summary of the ethical and social principles which the prophet considered essential to the nation's welfare is found in the Book of Isaiah than that in 1. 16, 17, "Cease to do evil; learn to do well; be anxious about right doing; set right the oppressor; help to his right the fatherless; take the part of the widow."

Isaiah's Activity as a Statesman. In addition to being a religious teacher, a preacher of righteousness and a social reformer, Isaiah was a statesman. A fundamental factor in his attitude as a statesman was his conception of the mission of the nation. Nowhere is this conception indicated more clearly and forcefully than in the parable of the vineyard in 5. 1–7. Among other things this parable teaches that the prophet thought of the nation not as a "chance conglomeration of individuals," with no purpose or destiny. He was convinced that back of the nation was God; it was he who formed it, who nourished it and brought it up (1. 2), who cared for it, who had for it a lofty purpose and mission, and who did his utmost to prepare the nation for its divinely appointed task. And this God expected results corresponding to the labors expended; if these were not forthcoming judgment became inevitable.

Isaiah's Attitude during the Syro-Ephraimitic Crisis. This conception of the nation and its mission compelled the prophet to take an active interest in the external politics of Judah. While this interest mani-

fested itself throughout the greater part of his ministry, it is especially in two crises of Judah's history that he attempted, though without success, to urge his own foreign policy upon king and people. The first attempt is described in chapters 7 and 8. It occurred about 734 B. C., a few years after the beginning of Isaiah's prophetic career. Rezin of Damascus and Pekah of Israel had united against Judah, purposing to depose its king and place upon the throne a tool of their own. The ultimate object of the invasion was probably to compel the southern kingdom to join the other nations in their efforts to resist the westward march of the Assyrian armies. When the news of the advance of the allies spread, the heart of the king "was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the forest are moved with the wind." In his consternation King Ahaz saw no way of escape but to throw himself upon the mercy of Tiglath-pileser IV of Assyria. Desiring to allay the king's fear and to prevent the carrying out of the king's policy, Isaiah sought an interview with Ahaz.

Reasons for Isaiah's Opposition to the Policy of Ahaz. Two reasons underlay the prophet's opposition. His inspired vision saw that both the political and the religious welfare of Judah demanded loyalty to Jehovah. An appeal to Tiglath-pileser would destroy the independence of Judah, would place her in a position of servitude, would open the door for continued annoyances, and would sap the nation's resources through the payment of annual tribute and participation in the Assyrian wars. Besides, the nation's higher interests were at stake. Alliances with foreign nations had always opened the way for grave religious perils; this

would be true again. In addition, Isaiah considered the very act of entering an alliance a sign of disloyalty to Jehovah. Isaiah was convinced that only a fearless and calm reliance on Jehovah could guide Judah safely through the present trouble and distress. The choice must be made between a policy of faith and one of unbelief.

Isaiah's Conception of Faith. Isaiah's conception of faith is brought out very clearly in three statements on the subject, found in 7. 9; 28. 16; 30. 15. From these passages it is evident that he understood faith to be a very practical thing, namely, a calm and courageous reliance upon God, who is able to prevent the evil and to bring to pass the good; such reliance to result in the non-use of any means that might seem a denial of God or be contrary to his will.

Later Events a Justification of the Prophetic Attitude. It was this kind of faith that the prophet demanded of King Ahaz in this crisis of the nation's history. Ahaz, weak, vain, and incompetent, could not appreciate such faith; he preferred an alliance with Assyria to one with Jehovah. Temporary relief came, but at what cost? The independence of Judah. From this time onward the kingdom was without independence, except when Judah rebelled, and then she suffered severely for her rashness. Assyria's rule was followed for a little while by that of Egypt; it in turn was succeeded by the Chaldean supremacy, until finally state, city, and temple were destroyed, and the people were carried into exile to weep over their misfortunes by the rivers of Babylon. Thus later events justified the attitude of the prophet–statesman. Not that Isaiah supposed for a moment that the ad-

vance of Assyria could be checked permanently, but complications with Assyria might be postponed indefinitely. When, without Judah's fault, such complications would become inevitable, it would be time enough to devise ways and means that would make them of least disadvantage to Judah.

Isaiah's Attitude during the Crisis of 705–701. Isaiah has sometimes been accused of inconsistency in his foreign policy, because in a later crisis he opposed with all his might the efforts to free Judah from the lordship of Assyria. This accusation is due to a complete disregard of the changes in the historical situation. About thirty years had passed. During the greater part of this period Judah had remained loyal to Assyria, though throughout all the years there had been in the nation an anti-Assyrian party, which sought to stir up a revolt against the Assyrian king. The same party was pro-Egyptian in its tendencies, seeking to form an alliance with the empire of the Pharaohs. A crisis came about 705, when a change of kings in Assyria encouraged several of the vassal states to throw off the yoke. In Palestine and Syria rejoicing was great. Isaiah warned Judah, but the pro-Egyptian party grew stronger and stronger. Many thought that with the aid of Egypt the Assyrian yoke might easily be broken while the new king, Sennacherib, was trying to restore order in the east. It was in this crisis, about 702 or 701, that Isaiah delivered those powerful appeals, found especially in chapters 29–31, in which he urged the people to remain loyal to Assyria and to desist from courting the favor of Egypt. The appeals fell upon deaf ears. Again, later events showed the wisdom of Isaiah's attitude. The pro-

Egyptian party prevailed and revolt against Assyria broke out. Chapters 36, 37 tell the story of the calamity that befell the misguided people. Had the policy of the prophet-statesman been adopted things would have been far different. When finally conditions appeared hopeless, appeal was made to Isaiah, and the greatness of his character shows itself in the readiness with which he responded to the cry of a frenzied king and people. The faith in Jehovah's willingness and power to help which prompted the policy of 734 also prompted the utterances of 701.

The Redeemed Remnant. Though Isaiah is a prophet of judgment, he is not a prophet of despair. The present corruption of the people made judgment inevitable, but from the judgment he saw emerge a redeemed and purified remnant, the nucleus of a new nation, ready to enter upon its glorious mission to mankind. This hope finds expression in the name of Isaiah's son *Shear-jashub* (7. 3), which is interpreted in 10. 20, 21, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and they that are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again lean upon him that smote them, but shall lean upon Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. A remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God." The salvation of a remnant is promised also in 4. 3, 4; 1. 24–27; 6. 13; 8. 16–18; etc.

The Messianic Kingdom. The redeemed remnant will form the nucleus of the new kingdom of God during the Messianic era. Conditions in this kingdom will be a reflection of the character of Jehovah, who will be in the midst of his people (4. 5, 6). The most complete description of the glories of this kingdom or of

the Messianic era is found in 2. 2–4, a passage which may be a quotation from an earlier prophet. Four features of the future glory are here emphasized: (1) Zion will be recognized as the center of Jehovah's universal dominion; (2) The spread of true religion will be accomplished not by the force of arms but through the moral influence going out from Zion; (3) There is to be no external world power; the nations will retain political independence; Jehovah, not Israel, will rule the world (compare also 19. 23–25; the nations that fail to submit will be destroyed); (4) War will come to an end; international disputes will be settled by arbitration, Jehovah himself being the arbiter. That the new kingdom will be a kingdom of purity, peace, and righteousness is taught also in other passages, for example, 1. 25–27; 4. 3, 4; 9. 4–7; 11. 4–9.

The Inviolability of Jerusalem. Closely connected with Isaiah's expectation that Zion will be the center of the future kingdom of God is his hope of the inviolability of the sacred city. The clearest expressions of this hope are found in connection with the crisis of 701, but it is by no means confined to that event; with rare exceptions it is reflected in all the utterances of the prophet. In this he differs from his contemporary Micah, who taught that Jerusalem should be plowed like a field. Certainly, it follows from the conditional character of all prophecy that, should Zion become so corrupt that a holy God could no longer dwell there, it too must be given over to judgment. The disregard of this condition by later generations caused much trouble to the prophet Jeremiah.

The Nature and Character of the Messianic King. In the picture of 2. 2–4 Jehovah himself is repre-

sented as ruling in Zion. There are, however, several passages (9. 1–7; 11. 1–5; 32. 1) in which Isaiah promises the advent of an ideal ruler, who will rule over the new kingdom in the place of Jehovah. This king is described as a descendant of David, who will be endowed with extraordinary, superhuman qualities that will equip him for his God-appointed task. According to 11. 2 the Spirit of Jehovah will rest upon him and furnish him with virtues of various kinds. Six are enumerated, which may be grouped in three pairs of two each: the first pair intellectual, the second practical, the third religious. Wisdom and understanding, or discernment, are the first two. The ideal ruler will possess the ability to discern and estimate things correctly, and the moral and intellectual qualifications to make proper use of this knowledge. The next group includes counsel, that is, the ability to find ways and means and adapt them to the proper ends and the ability to make right resolutions at the proper time, and might, that is, the power to carry out his plans and resolutions. These two qualities furnish the basis for two of the names in 9. 6, "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God," literally, "a wonder of a counselor, a God of a hero." The remaining terms, "knowledge" and "fear," are both to be connected with "of Jehovah." The new ruler will possess the knowledge of Jehovah and the fear of Jehovah. The former denotes insight into the character of Jehovah and his claims upon men; the second, which is the common Old Testament expression for piety, means a reverential attitude that will result in loving obedience.

Character of the Reign of the Messianic King. The character of the new king's rule is also described by

Isaiah. The two titles, "Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace," in 9. 6, describe it as paternal and peaceful. The succeeding verse also declares that to peace there will be no end, and that the king will rule in justice and righteousness. The poor and the needy will be the objects of his special care (11. 4). In all his actions he will be guided by a right attitude toward Jehovah and continued reliance upon him.

The Foreshadowing of the Church. From the passages mentioned it is seen that Isaiah's hope for the future centered not in the nation as a whole, but in a small faithful nucleus. In this he agrees with his predecessors, but Isaiah goes beyond them in organizing the faithful into a group of disciples and devoting himself to their instruction after he had failed with king and people (8. 16ff.). "The formation of this little community was a new thing in the history of religion. Till then no one had dreamed of a fellowship of faith dissociated from all national forms, maintained without the exercise of ritual services, bound together by faith in the divine word alone. It was the birth of a new era in the Old Testament religion, for it was the birth of the conception of the church, the first step in the emancipation of spiritual religion from the forms of political life—a step not less significant that all its consequences were not seen till centuries had passed away."

CHAPTER VI

MICAH

THE PERSON AND LIFE OF THE PROPHET

Isaiah and Micah. A few years after Isaiah entered upon his prophetic career there appeared another prophet in Judah, by the name of Micah. Both cherished lofty conceptions of the character of Jehovah and of the obligations resting upon his people, and both had firmly established convictions concerning the nature and ultimate triumph of the kingdom of God. A comparison of the utterances of the two men also brings out resemblances in style, thought, topics, and even in phrases; but the contrasts between the two in origin, training, and sphere of activity are equally marked. The one was a city prophet, of high social standing and the counselor of kings; the other, a simple country man, born of obscure parentage and in close touch and sympathy with the peasant class.

The Home of Micah. For information concerning the prophet Micah we are dependent almost exclusively upon the book bearing his name. From it we learn that he was a Morasthite (1. 1), that is, an inhabitant of Moresheth, a village probably identical with Moresheth-gath in 1. 14. This verse suggests that it was near the city of Gath. Jerome refers to it as a small village near Eleutheropolis, about twenty-five miles southwest of Jerusalem, near the Philistine border. Nothing is said of his family. His parents seem to

have been pious and ardent worshipers of Jehovah; at least, the name given to the son, Micah, in its fuller form, Micaiah (which means, Who is like Jehovah?) appears to contain a confession of faith on their part.

The Date of Micah's Activity. Outside of the Book of Micah the prophet is mentioned only in Jer. 26. 18, 19. From that passage it would seem that Micah was responsible, in part at least, for the reformation under Hezekiah (2 Kings 18. 4). Neither the beginning nor the close of Micah's activity can be definitely dated. Chapter 1. 1 assigns his ministry to the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah—in round numbers, to the years between 740 and 700. That Micah prophesied in the days of Hezekiah is affirmed also in Jer. 26. 18, 19, where Mic. 3. 12 is quoted. The words quoted are so closely connected with the preceding verses that they carry with them the entire third chapter; and certain striking similarities between it and chapters 1 and 2 place it almost beyond doubt that all three chapters come from approximately the same period. But internal evidence—for example, 1. 6—makes it clear that 1. 1ff. belongs to the years immediately preceding the fall of Samaria, which, according to 2 Kings 18. 2, occurred in the sixth year of Hezekiah. Internal evidence, therefore, would seem to support that part of the testimony of the title which assigns the activity of Micah to the reign of Hezekiah.

The book contains no positive evidence that Micah prophesied during the reigns of the two earlier kings, but the utterances in 6. 1—7. 6, which by many are assigned to the reign of the successor of Hezekiah, Manasseh, seem to find a most suitable occasion in the reign of Ahaz, or perhaps even that of Jotham; hence

there is good reason for believing that Micah began to prophesy about 735 B. C., and that his ministry continued until about 700 B. C. The conditions in Judah during this period are described above, on p. 75ff.

THE MESSAGE OF MICAH

Arrangement of the Book of Micah. The Book of Micah falls naturally into three parts: Chapters 1 and 2; chapters 3–5; and chapters 6 and 7, each part beginning with "Hear ye." Each division contains a description of the present corruption, an announcement of imminent judgment, and one or more pictures of a bright and glorious future. It would be erroneous, however, to suppose that the three parts represent three connected discourses delivered to the people on three different occasions. They are rather three collections of the essential contents of the oral utterances of the prophet during his entire ministry. The principle of arrangement is not chronological, but, in a broad sense, logical; that is, the collector or collectors kept in mind the general scheme—corruption, judgment, salvation of a remnant, promise—but within the general scheme the separate utterances were arranged with less care and without the introduction of connecting links. As a result abruptness in transition is frequent, and at times it is difficult to trace the exact line of thought.

Announcement of Judgment upon Israel and Judah, Chapter 1. The first part begins with an announcement of judgment upon Israel and Judah (1. 2–16). It opens with a sublime apostrophe to the nations of the earth and a magnificent picture of the approach of Jehovah in judgment (2–4). Samaria will be laid in ruins on account of her sins (5–7). In time destruction

will also come upon Judah (8–16). The prophet puts the announcement to Judah in the form of a lament over the fall of its cities and towns.

The Present Social and Moral Corruption the Cause of the Judgment, Chapter 2. Chapter 2 sets forth the causes that make the judgment announced in chapter 1 inevitable. It opens with a woe upon the unjust nobles: They have robbed others, but their ill-gotten gain will be taken from them (1–4). The prophet foresees that an attempt will be made on the part of the people and false prophets to silence him by declaring his utterances to be absurd; hence he insists that his message is in perfect accord with the principles underlying the divine government of the world. God promises good only to him who walks uprightly. This Israel has failed to do, therefore disaster must come (5–8). There is no escape from the wrath of Jehovah: as they have driven the poor from their homes so they will be driven from their possessions into exile (9, 10). The prophet next describes the kind of prophet they would like to hear, one who promises peace and prosperity and flatters the self-righteous hypocrites (11). This Micah cannot do. He can see nothing but disaster in the immediate future, therefore his message is primarily one of judgment and doom. Nevertheless, he too has a message of salvation, though not for the immediate future nor for all the listeners, but only for the loyal worshipers of Jehovah. These, purified through suffering, will be assembled again, Jehovah will redeem them and restore them to their old home (12, 13).

The Present Degradation and the Inevitable Doom, Chapter 3. The second section, chapters 3–5, presents

several contrasts between the present degradation and the future exaltation. Chapter 3 furnishes a vivid description of the present corruption. Civil and ecclesiastical leaders alike disregard the principles of righteousness and equity and abuse the privileges of their offices (1–3). They show no mercy, hence Jehovah will refuse to listen to them in the hour of judgment (4). The false prophets are largely responsible for the decline in virtue; they have become mercenary and care nothing for the truth. The priests also are actuated by a spirit of avarice and greed. In the face of the widespread moral corruption they presume to rely upon the favor of Jehovah (5–11). On account of this failure to do the will of Jehovah, Zion will be utterly ruined (12).

The Exaltation of the Remnant, Chapters 4, 5. But the ruin will not continue forever. There will come a turn for the better. A remnant will survive the catastrophe, and this remnant, restored to its former home, will be raised to honor and glory. This exaltation is the subject of chapters 4 and 5. However, the two chapters do not form a continuous discourse; they are rather a collection of short oracles, all dealing with the same subject, but describing the Messianic age from various points of view and coming from different periods of the prophet's activity.

The Present Distress and the Future Glory, Chapter 4. The first utterance contains a sublime picture of Zion's future glory as the center of the universal religion (4. 1–5). When the era of Messianic felicity dawns the dispersed of Israel will share in its glory. Jehovah will bring back and heal a remnant of those whom he cast off in his anger. The remnant will

develop into a strong and powerful nation, and will no more suffer from weak and incompetent rulers, for Jehovah himself will rule forever (6–8).

The distant future, the prophet is convinced, will be all brightness and glory, but in the immediate future he can see nothing but gloom and despair. He beholds the impending destruction; yea, he already hears the lamentation (9); nevertheless, Jehovah will redeem his people from all their enemies (10). In the next oracle the prophet again starts from the present calamity, and ends with a promise of complete victory (11–13).

The Messianic King and the Blessings of the Messianic Age, Chapter 5. In 5. 1 the prophet returns once more to the condition now present or imminent; but immediately he rises from the troublesome present to the glorious future, which he describes with a fullness not seen elsewhere in the book. He introduces the personal Messiah, who is to be born in Bethlehem (2). Though temporary distress is inevitable, the sequel will be glorious (3). Like a kind shepherd the Messiah will feed his flock (4). He is peace personified, and his rule will be peace. Should an enemy attack the kingdom of God there will be a superabundance of leaders to hasten to its defense (5, 6). In the succeeding verses the prophet considers the restored nation's relation to other peoples. To some it will dispense blessings and prove a source of increased vitality (7); to others it will bring terror and destruction (8). He prays that Israel may be successful in its conquests (9). When the people have learned to rely upon Jehovah he will destroy all implements of war (10, 11), and remove all witchcraft and soothsayers (12).

Idolatry will come to an end (13, 14), and Jehovah will be the avenger of his people (15).

Jehovah's Controversy with Israel, 6. 1–8. With 6. 1 begins a new series of utterances. The prophet pictures, in dramatic form, a judicial contest between Jehovah and his people. Jehovah himself presents the accusation. He calls attention to the countless blessings bestowed upon the nation during its past history, and complains that his loving care has been met with basest ingratitude (1–5). Against this accusation the people seek to defend themselves by expressing their willingness to do anything to win the divine favor. If they have fallen short it is due to their ignorance concerning the real requirements of Jehovah (6, 7). To this plea reply is made that ignorance is inexcusable, since the demands of Jehovah have been made known again and again (8).

The Desperate Condition of the People, 6. 9—7. 6. With verse 9 begins a new accusation and denunciation. Jehovah denounces, in righteous indignation, the injustice, oppression, and violence prevalent in the capital, and threatens judgment in the form of an invasion, which will result in the devastation of the land (9–16).

The accusation is continued in 7. 1–6, but now the prophet is the speaker. He describes the desperate condition of the people: anarchy, injustice, judicial corruption everywhere; even the tenderest ties of family relation are disrupted.

Prayer for Deliverance and its Answer, 7. 7–20. In verse 7 the penitent community, now sitting in darkness, pleads for deliverance, and expresses the assurance that Jehovah will bring it out into the light and give it the victory over the arrogant enemy (7–10).

To this expression of confidence Jehovah, or the prophet in his name, responds with words of encouragement: the loyalty of the petitioner will be rewarded with a glorious restoration (11–13). In verse 14 the prophet becomes the spokesman of the people. He pleads for the fulfillment of the promise of restoration, and rejoices in the terror and humiliation of the nations of the world (14–17).

The book closes with a doxology. The author, reveling in the thought of a glorious future, sings a hymn in honor of Jehovah, who alone is God; he celebrates the divine attributes of loving-kindness, compassion, and faithfulness, about to be manifested in the deliverance promised by Jehovah (18–20).

THE TEACHING OF MICAH

Jehovah and His Requirements. The teaching of Micah is simple and forceful. In many respects it resembles that of his predecessors. His theology insists on the holiness of Jehovah and the universality and righteousness of the divine government of the world. He deals with all, including Israel, on the basis of ethical principles. As long as his people do right they will enjoy the divine favor (2. 7), but if they turn against him they must suffer punishment. Jehovah's good will is secured not by a careful observance of the ritual, or by the bringing of sacrifices, whatever their intrinsic value, but by a life in accord with the principles of righteousness, by the diligent practice of kindness and brotherliness, and by a living fellowship with God in the spirit of humility, which should ever govern the intercourse of weak and sinful man with a holy and perfect God (6. 6–8).

The Inevitable Doom. The prophet did not deceive himself into an expectation that his high moral and religious ideals would be sufficiently attractive to bring about a complete transformation in the whole nation. He foresaw that the majority would continue in rebellion and that, therefore, a destructive blow must fall which would make an end of the national existence of both Israel and Judah (1. 2–16; 2. 10; 3. 12; etc.).

The Messianic Age. But he was just as strongly convinced that a remnant would be saved, and that under the Messianic king this remnant would enjoy a life of permanent peace and prosperity. In his description of the Messianic king Micah passes beyond Amos and Hosea, and agrees essentially with Isaiah, except that he adds the birthplace of the ideal ruler (5. 2–6). Through the moral influence going out from the remnant (5. 7) the knowledge of Jehovah will spread to all nations, and many will flock to him for instruction (4. 1–4).

Greatness of the Eighth Century Prophets. Never again in the history of the Hebrew people, and one might almost say, never again in the history of the human race, arose within one brief lifetime (755–735 B. C.) four men who left a greater and more permanent impression upon the religious development of the human race than did the four divinely inspired leaders Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah. They, more than any other set of men during the Old Testament period, were responsible for the preservation and growth of the religion out of which sprang, at a later time, Christianity.

CHAPTER VII

JEREMIAH

POLITICAL CONDITIONS IN JUDAH DURING THE CENTURY PRECEDING THE FALL OF JERUSALEM

The Reigns of Manasseh and Amon. In the opening section of Chapter V the political history of Judah is traced to the death of Hezekiah, some time between 697 and 686. He was succeeded by his son Manasseh. According to 2 Kings 21. 1 the new king was only twelve years old when he began to reign, and he continued upon the throne for fifty-five years. The information concerning political events in his reign is meager. He seems to have continued to pay tribute to the Assyrian kings, though 2 Chron. 33. 11 states that he brought upon himself the wrath of the king of Assyria and was carried in chains to Babylon. On the whole, the political situation seems to have remained as it was under Hezekiah.

About 641 B. C. Manasseh was succeeded by his son Amon, who reigned two years. During his rule also the political situation seems to have remained unchanged. For some reason dissatisfaction broke out among the king's servants, and he was assassinated, perhaps, indirectly at least, through the influence of the prophetic party, which was in disfavor both with Amon and with Manasseh.

The Reign of Josiah. Josiah, a boy eight years old, came to the throne about 639 B. C. Fifty verses

in 2 Kings 22, 23 are devoted to his reign, but little is said concerning political events. He seems to have remained loyal to his Assyrian lord to the very end, even when the latter's prestige had commenced to vanish; and this loyalty cost him his life. When it became evident that Assyria was doomed, her old-time rival, Egypt, was anxious to claim a part of her territory before anyone else could do so. The energetic Necoh "went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates." Prompted by a sense of duty, and trusting in Jehovah, for whose worship he had done so much, "king Josiah went against him," hoping to check his advance. In the old battlefield of Palestine, the Plain of Esdraelon, near the old town of Megiddo, they met and, in the simple words of the author of Kings, "Pharaoh-necoh slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him."

The Supremacy of Egypt. Jehoahaz was raised to the throne in Josiah's place, but his reign was of short duration. After three months Necoh ordered him brought to Riblah, on the Orontes, where the Egyptian king had established his court; there he was put in chains and sent to Egypt. An older son of Josiah, Eliakim, whose name was changed to Jehoiakim, was made king, and an exorbitant tribute was imposed upon the land. Thus Judah passed from the control of Assyria to that of Egypt. With Jehoiakim the half-heathenish party returned to power, which inaugurated a series of religious and political errors and crimes that resulted, in less than a quarter of a century, in the complete destruction of Judah and Jerusalem.

The Supremacy of Chaldea. The supremacy of Egypt

continued for about four years. After the capture of Nineveh the Chaldean empire, which had grown up around Babylon, laid claim to the greater part of Assyria's territory, including Syria and Palestine. In a battle fought in 604 near Carchemish, on the Euphrates, Egypt was defeated, and its rule in Palestine came to an end. Nebuchadnezzar, the victor, was compelled by the death of his father to return home before he could follow up his victory, but by the year 600 his rule was firmly established in the west.

The Reigns of Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin. Jehoiakim paid tribute until 597, when, probably trusting in the promises of Egypt, he refused to pay and revolted. The other states in Palestine and Syria, instead of joining with him, overran his territory at the instigation of their Chaldean lord. Death removed the king before he saw the final results of his folly.

He was succeeded by his eighteen-year-old son Jehoiachin, who was not able to avert the disaster. The cities outside of Jerusalem were abandoned to their fate. In vain the Judæans looked to Egypt for help. At last a division of the Chaldean army laid siege to the capital. Seeing that resistance was futile, the king and his court surrendered. Jehoiachin was carried to Babylon, where he was treated with much kindness and consideration during the latter part of his exile (2 Kings 25. 27–30; Jer. 52. 31–34). With him went about ten thousand of the best people of Judah. To pay the heavy tribute exacted by the conqueror palace and temple were looted. Only the pillars, the brazen sea, the vases, and the less valuable vessels were left behind (Jer. 27. 19, 20).

The Reign of Zedekiah and the Fall of Jerusalem. Over the people that remained in the land Nebuchadnezzar placed as his vassal, Mattaniah, a younger son of Josiah, whose name he changed to Zedekiah. The situation called for a ruler who could organize the turbulent elements left behind and hold them to a wise and consistent policy. Unfortunately, the new king lacked moral strength and courage. Although his intentions seem to have been good, he proved only a tool in the hands of his plotting advisers.

Finally, in 588, against the persistent plea of Jeremiah, Judah revolted again. Ammon and Tyre lent their aid, and appeal was made to Egypt for support. Nebuchadnezzar gave the rebellion his immediate attention, and early in the year 587 his armies surrounded Jerusalem. Temporarily the siege had to be raised, to meet an Egyptian army; but when the latter retreated the Chaldeans returned. The siege lasted a year and a half. In July, 586, the besiegers forced an entrance into the city. Zedekiah sought to escape but was overtaken. He was carried before Nebuchadnezzar, who was at Riblah, where he was compelled to witness the slaughter of his children; then his eyes were put out, and he was carried into exile. Many others, especially of the better classes, were slain or taken into captivity. Then the city was pillaged and set on fire.

Brief Rule of Gedaliah. Some of the poorer inhabitants were allowed to remain in the land. With them were left a few nobles whose loyalty could be trusted. Over the little state Gedaliah was appointed governor. Among his stanchest supporters was the prophet Jeremiah. Since Jerusalem was destroyed,

Mizpah, about five miles to the northwest, was selected as the seat of government.

For about two months (Jer. 41. 1) all went well. Fugitives returned, agricultural pursuits were resumed, and old hopes were beginning to revive when suddenly, by an act of treachery, all prospects were ruined. The petty kings of the surrounding nations looked with envy upon the newborn prosperity; finally the king of Ammon persuaded a certain Ishmael to slay Gedaliah and his attendants. Afraid that the death of the governor would be speedily avenged by Nebuchadnezzar, the surviving Jews fled to Egypt, against the advice of Jeremiah. Thus the kingdom of Judah came to an end.

The Scythian Invasion. During the period described in the preceding paragraphs three important political events took place outside of Judah, which vitally affected the fortunes of the latter and were not without influence on the prophetic utterances of the age. The first in point of time was the Scythian invasion. The Scythians were a non-Semitic race of barbarians which swept in great hordes over Western Asia during the seventh century B. C. They went down the Mediterranean coast as far as Egypt, and at a later time had a prominent part in the destruction of Nineveh. The Book of Zephaniah and some of the early utterances of Jeremiah reflect the terror that was caused by the advance of these hordes.

The Fall of Assyria. The second important event was the capture of Nineveh and the fall of the Assyrian empire. During the last years of the reign of King Ashurbanapal of Assyria (668–626) the empire was slowly going to pieces. After his death the end ap-

proached more rapidly. In 625 the Chaldean Nabopolassar established an independent kingdom in Babylon. With the Scythians pressing from the north and the new Chaldean power from the south, Assyria was in serious peril. Finally, about 610, Nabopolassar entered into an alliance with the Scythians, who advanced against Nineveh. The struggle continued for two years. The attacking forces met determined resistance. At last a breach was made in the northeastern corner of the wall, and the city was taken, plundered, and burned. With this catastrophe the Assyrian world power came to an end. Nahum is the prophet of Nineveh's doom.

The Rise of the Chaldean Empire. Closely connected with the decline and fall of Assyria is the rise of the Chaldean or Neo-Babylonian power. The city of Babylon had been for many centuries the seat of a mighty empire. In time Assyria had overshadowed and finally annexed it. On the shores of the Persian Gulf there lived a people called the Chaldeans, who had caused much trouble to both Babylonia and Assyria. During the latter part of the seventh century one of their number, Nabopolassar, succeeded in making himself master of Babylon, and finally declared his independence of Assyria. When Nineveh fell this Chaldean power divided the Assyrian territory with the Scythians, and then entered upon new conquests. It reached the height of its power and splendor under Nebuchadnezzar, who reigned from 604 to 562. During his reign Jerusalem fell, and the Jews were carried into exile. The early campaigns of the Chaldean armies are reflected in the prophecies of Habakkuk, while Jeremiah, who was a witness of all the events

mentioned, watched the final destruction of the holy city.

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS

The Religious Reaction under Manasseh. The moral and religious conditions in Judah during the eighth century are described on p. 75ff. Hezekiah attempted reforms, but he by no means succeeded in removing all abuses. Under Manasseh a reaction swept over the land, which threatened the very existence of Jehovah religion. The idols torn down by Hezekiah were carefully restored, the Asherim were again set up, and the enchanters and soothsayers exercised their old influence; even human sacrifices were offered (2 Kings 21. 6). The worship of other deities was introduced in the temple (2 Kings 21. 3, 5; 23. 11, 12), and the popular worship became a strange combination of foreign and native cults.

Religious Conditions during the Early Years of Josiah's Reign. Amon followed in the footsteps of his father, so that the religious outlook was exceedingly dark when, in 639, Josiah came to the throne. Fortunately, the latter seems to have been under prophetic influence from the beginning, and, assisted by the faithful nucleus within the nation, he undertook a sweeping religious reform, which reached its culmination in the eighteenth year of his reign. When Zephaniah preached and the early prophecies of Jeremiah were delivered this reform was still in the future; and from the utterances of these two prophets, as also from 2 Kings 22, 23, we may gather some idea of the corrupt state of religion before 621 B. C. The practices restored by Manasseh were continued. The Baalim were worshiped and the high places were flourishing; a

half-hearted Jehovah worship, which was in reality idolatry, was widespread, while great multitudes had turned entirely from following Jehovah. Jeremiah sums up his indictment against the nation in 2. 13ff., and one of the two evils condemned is apostasy from Jehovah: "They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." Idolatry had crept into the temple itself (7. 30). In addition to open apostasy the prophets beheld a provoking skepticism. When the cruel and godless Manasseh was allowed to sit undisturbed upon the throne for half a century or more, many began to question the interest of Jehovah in the affairs of the nation; they began to say in their hearts, "Jehovah will not do good, neither will he do evil" (Zeph. 1. 12; compare also Jer. 5. 12). Many became practical atheists, who denied the justice, or even the reality, of the divine government of the world.

In the face of this heart-apostasy the people continued to trust in the efficacy of the outward forms of religion. They offered sacrifice, and felt secure in the thought that the temple of Jehovah was in their midst (Jer. 7. 4). Conditions could not be otherwise, since the majority of the religious leaders had become misleaders. Zephaniah complains, "Her prophets are light and treacherous persons; her priests have profaned the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law" (3. 4). The people would listen to these false guides (Jer. 8. 8ff.), while paying no attention to the true prophets (7. 28).

The Reforms of Josiah. The discovery of the book of the law in 621 produced, for a time at least, a change

for the better. After Josiah had assured himself that the book correctly expressed the will of Jehovah, it was read to the people, and king and people entered into a solemn covenant to obey its injunctions. The details of the reforms inaugurated are described in 2 Kings 23 and 2 Chron. 34, 35. Certainly, this religious reformation, like all others instituted by state authority, affected first the externals of religion; but the thirteen peaceful years which followed were improved to impress the fundamental principles underlying it upon the hearts and consciences of the people.

The Religious Reaction under Jehoiakim. The death of Josiah in 608 was a severe blow to the immediate realization of the ideals of the prophets. The heathenish party, which had been in the background for some years, hastened to point to the calamity as a divine judgment upon the king's iconoclastic zeal to change old conditions and practices; and with the common people, who were accustomed to associate prosperity with the divine favor, and calamity with the divine wrath, such argument would have considerable weight. Jehoahaz may have been the choice of the prophetic party, but when he was displaced by Jehoiakim, a cruel, selfish, and luxury-loving monarch (Jer. 22. 1ff.), the heathenish party returned to power. Then conditions became again as they were before the reform of Josiah and continued to be so until Jerusalem was destroyed. The people again went after other gods, or trusted in the externals of religion, while the prophets of Jehovah were persecuted and even slain (Jer. 26. 20–23). No wonder that even good men began to question the reality of a divine Providence over Judah (Hab. 1. 2ff.).

The Moral Conditions as Portrayed by the Seventh Century Prophets. Moral conditions during the seventh century were equally bad. The Old Testament contains no contemporaneous description of moral conditions during the reigns of Manasseh and Amon, but we may assume that they were practically identical with those reflected in the prophecies coming from the period preceding the reform of 621. Zephaniah furnishes a vivid picture of conditions in his day. Social injustice and moral corruption were widespread: "Woe to her that is rebellious and polluted, to the oppressing city!" (3. 1.) "Her princes in the midst of her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; they leave nothing till the morrow" (3. 3). "They rose early and corrupted all their doings" (3. 7). Luxury and extravagance might be seen on every hand, and fortunes were heaped up by unjust oppression of the poor: "The princes, and the king's sons, and all such as are clothed with foreign apparel. . . . Those that leap over the threshold, that fill their master's house with violence and deceit" (1. 8, 9).

Nahum is silent concerning conditions in Judah; but Habakkuk refers to them again; and he does so in a way that shows the prevalence of violence and oppression. The widespread corruption in Judah is the cause of the prophet's perplexity. He cannot harmonize the apparent indifference of Jehovah in the presence of deep-seated corruption with his conception of the divine character (1. 2–4).

Jeremiah, who was the contemporary of all three prophets, confirms their complaints. "Run ye to and fro," he says, "through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof,

if ye can find a man, if there be any that doeth justly, that seeketh truth. . . . And though they say, As Jehovah liveth; surely they swear falsely" (5. 1, 2). Falsehood, faithlessness, oppression, covetousness, injustice, violence, murder, and other vices and crimes met the prophet on every hand (5. 26–28). Speaking of Jerusalem he declares, "She is wholly oppression in the midst of her. As a well casteth forth its waters, so she casteth forth her wickedness: violence and destruction is heard in her; before me continually is sickness and wounds" (6. 6, 7). Similar indictments are brought in 6. 13, where Jeremiah complains that even prophets and priests deal falsely, 9. 2ff.; 34. 8ff.; also, by implication, in 7. 5ff. Indeed, the whole book reflects the compassion of Jeremiah for a people that has become utterly corrupt and is therefore doomed to destruction.

THE PROPHET JEREMIAH

The Personal Life of Jeremiah. The latter part of the seventh century produced four prophets in Judah: Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Nahum, and Habakkuk. The greatest of these, and the one enjoying the longest period of activity, was Jeremiah. He was of priestly descent, the son of Hilkiah, of the priests in Anathoth (compare 1 Kings 2. 26), a town about three miles northeast of Jerusalem. It is not improbable that he continued to live in Anathoth even after he became a prophet (11. 21; 12. 6; 32. 7), though his prophetic ministry was exercised chiefly in Jerusalem. The prophetic call came to him in the thirteenth year of Josiah, that is, in 626, and he continued to prophesy until after the fall of Jerusalem in 586. During the Chaldean crisis he persistently opposed the revolt

against Nebuchadnezzar. In the face of persecution and wrongful imprisonment he insisted that submission to the king of Babylon was the only hope of safety. For this he was regarded a traitor to his country, and on more than one occasion he barely escaped with his life. In recognition of his loyalty he was afterward rewarded by the Chaldeans with being permitted to choose between going with the exiles to Babylonia and remaining with his kinsmen in Judah. He chose the latter, perhaps because he hoped that under a sympathetic governor he might yet succeed in winning a remnant to his higher ideals of religion and life. After the assassination of Gedaliah he opposed flight to Egypt, but in vain; and the fugitives compelled him to accompany them. He continued his ministries there until, according to tradition, he met a martyr's death at the hands of his countrymen. "There," says Montefiore, "amid mournful surroundings and obstinate idolatry, his teaching spurned and misunderstood, his country waste and desolate, the curtain falls upon the great prophet's life in darkness and desolation."

The Call of Jeremiah. Jeremiah hesitated to yield to the divine call, pleading as an excuse his extreme youthfulness (1. 6); but Jehovah persisted, and finally the young man obeyed (1. 7–10). The task set before him was not an easy one, for his ministry was to include the nations; nor was it very inspiring, for denunciation, judgment, and destruction were to predominate in his message. Four verbs are used to call attention to the dark side of his ministry, only two to the bright side. No wonder the prophet hesitated.

The Peculiar Temperament of Jeremiah. However, it was not only the difficulty of the task, but also a

natural timidity, that caused Jeremiah to shrink from the prophetic office. His was also a highly emotional temperament; he was buoyed up by success, depressed by failure, always conscious of the heavy burden Jehovah had imposed upon him. Frequently he was almost overcome by despair, and in such moments he bitterly complained of his fate, and wished that he might be released from his office: "Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them!" (9. 2; compare also 20. 7–9.) Sometimes he gives way to despair to the extent of cursing the day on which he was born (20. 14–18; 15. 10), and challenging the justice of the divine government (12. 1ff.). Even more startling are the invocations of vengeance upon his persecutors (18. 19–23; compare 11. 18ff.; 15. 15ff.; 17. 18; 20. 11, 12).

The Hardships Endured by Jeremiah and their Effects upon Him. Expressions like these show that even the noblest Old Testament saints fell short of the ideals held up by Jesus. Temporarily Jeremiah's better self seems to have succumbed to feelings of personal revenge. And this cannot appear so very strange when we consider the awful hardships he was called upon to endure. His ministry was a continuous martyrdom. He stood almost alone; we know of only one faithful adherent, namely, Baruch; he was to form no domestic ties (16. 1); his life was in constant danger; prophets and priests opposed him (20. 1ff.; 23. 9ff.; 28. 1; 29. 1); his neighbors at Anathoth and even his relatives were against him (11. 21; 12. 6; 20. 10); he was thrown into prison and barely escaped with his life (37. 14ff.; 38. 1ff.). Surely the provocation to

wrath and vengeance was great. And yet it would not be fair to ascribe the expressions referred to entirely to a feeling of personal vindictiveness. Jeremiah was the prophet of Jehovah; those who attacked him by that very act attacked his God; and his curses are as much curses upon the enemies of Jehovah as they are curses upon the prophet's persecutors, called forth by an intense loyalty to his God and the desire to see the divine righteousness triumph.

The Faith and Courage of Jeremiah. Jeremiah's cries of despair must not cause us to overlook the brighter and nobler aspects of his character. A man who, in the face of all the harrowing experiences recorded in the book, remained at his post and continued to proclaim with no uncertain sound the will of Jehovah, must be a man of sublime faith and courage. The prophet's courageous conduct in the presence of all kinds of dangers becomes only more remarkable in the light of the natural and temperamental timidity, evidences of which may be seen in many periods of his life. "Is not the victory of a constitutionally timid and shrinking character a nobler moral triumph than that of a man who never knew fear—who marches to the conflict with others with a light heart, simply because it is his nature to do so—because he has had no experience of a previous conflict with self?" Jeremiah is a shining example of those believers whose weakness, by the grace of God, has been made strong.

The Tenderness and Compassion of Jeremiah. The tenderness and compassion with which Jeremiah watches the approach of the nation's doom remind one of Hosea: "My anguish, my anguish! I am pained at my very heart; my heart is disquieted in me; I

cannot hold my peace; because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war" (4. 19; 8. 18, 21, 22; 9. 1). This tenderness of heart made him, as it did Hosea, in a peculiar manner the messenger of Jehovah's outraged love. "We may recognize in Jeremiah's character," says Kirkpatrick, "a special fitness for his mission. That tender, shrinking, sympathetic heart could more fully feel, and more adequately express, the ineffable divine sorrow over the guilty people, the eternal love, which was never stronger than at the moment when it seemed to have been metamorphosed into bitter wrath and implacable vengeance."

Jeremiah's Methods of Work. The Book of Jeremiah enables us to get a fairly good idea of the prophet's methods of work. He selected the most frequented places and the most public occasions for the delivery of his discourses: the gate of the temple on a festival day, when people from all parts of Judah had come to worship (7. 2); the gates of the city, through which king and people must pass (17. 19); the court of the temple (19. 14; 26. 2; 35. 10); the royal palace (22. 1); the common dwelling place of the Rechabites (35. 2). But he was not content with these public discourses; he sought to impress his message more deeply by the performance of symbolical acts; for example, the hiding of the girdle by the Euphrates (13. 1ff.), the breaking of the earthen vessel (19. 1ff.). The purchase of a field at Anathoth (32. 6ff.) and the test of the Rechabites (35. 1ff.) were also intended to enforce his teaching. The activity of the potter (18. 1ff.) furnished him with a message to his people. Thus in season and out of season, by common or uncommon methods, Jere-

miah sought to impress upon his countrymen the truth of Jehovah as he understood it.

THE MESSAGE OF JEREMIAH

Composition of the Book of Jeremiah. The manner in which at least the greater portion of the Book of Jeremiah was written down is set forth in chapter 36. In the fourth year of Jehoiakim, that is, about 604, Jeremiah dictated the prophecies which he had delivered previously to his scribe Baruch, who inscribed them in a roll. In the following year, in the ninth month, he read this roll, at the command of Jeremiah, in the house of Jehovah before the people. The report of it finally reached the ears of the king, who ordered it read in his own presence. After the reading of a few pages the king seized the roll, cut it up, and cast it into the fire. Whereupon Baruch, at the dictation of the prophet, rewrote the roll, adding some utterances not included in the first collection. Probably neither the first nor the second roll contained more than the substance of Jeremiah's discourses. The utterances delivered subsequently to the fifth year of Jehoiakim were added at a later time, perhaps also by Baruch. The exact connection of this early collection with the present Book of Jeremiah is a matter of dispute.

Arrangement of the Book of Jeremiah. The book, which contains besides the messages of the prophet much biographical and other historical material, is arranged by Delitzsch in "nine groups or books of which each three, in a certain sense, form a trilogy": 1. The book of the time of Josiah, or, of the calling and first preaching of the prophet, chapters 1–6.

2. The book of the time of Jehoiakim, or, the preaching at the gate of the temple, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, especially concerning the idolatry of the people, chapters 7–12. 3. The book of the irrevocable curse, belonging to the time of Jehoiachin, chapters 13–20. 4. The book against the shepherds of the people, without chronological arrangement, chapters 21–25. 5. The book of the conflict of Jeremiah with the false prophets, belonging partly to the reign of Jehoiakim, and partly to the first years of Zedekiah, chapters 26–29. 6. The book of the restoration of Israel, without chronological arrangement, chapters 30–33. 7. The book of the accounts of the unbelief and skepticism of the kings and the people of Israel, accounts belonging to the time of Jehoiakim, and encompassed by incidents of the time of Zedekiah, chapters 34–38. 8. The book of the destinies of the people after the destruction of Jerusalem, chapters 39–45. 9. The book of the prophecies concerning the nations, a decade of oracles, beginning with Egypt and ending with Babylon, belonging partly to the time of Jehoiakim, and partly to the time of Zedekiah, chapters 46–51.

The Call of Jeremiah and the First Visions of Doom, Chapter 1. Chapter 1 may be called the introduction to the whole book. The title (1–3) is followed by an account of the call of Jeremiah to be a prophet unto the nations, "to pluck up and to break down and to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant" (4–10). In two visions—the almond tree (11, 12) and the boiling caldron (13–16)—he sees prefigured the approaching doom. His task will not be an easy one, but Jehovah will give him the victory (17–19).

Israel's Former Love and Present Apostasy, Chapter 2. The general subject of chapters 2–6, probably a summary of Jeremiah's teaching during the early years of his ministry, is the judgment upon Judah for its rebellion against Jehovah. Chapter 2 contrasts the people's former love with their present apostasy. In the beginning Israel was pure and holy (1–3), but soon it forsook Jehovah, "the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water" (4–13). As a result severe judgments have fallen upon the people (14–17), but without bringing them to their senses. They still trust in Egypt and Assyria and in gods that cannot help (18–28), while they refuse to heed the divine efforts to bring them to repentance. Self-complacently they assert their innocence, therefore an awful judgment will fall upon them (29–37).

Judah's Ultimate Return to Jehovah, 3. 1—4. 4. Judah has been like a faithless spouse, and her expressions of repentance have been insincere (3. 1–5). The continuation of this section seems to be in verses 19ff. In spite of the past and present faithlessness the backslider will repent and return, and thus become a source of blessing to the nations of the earth (3. 19—4. 4).

Chapter 3. 6–18 is an oracle by itself. Judah has seen the fate which overtook Israel on account of her sins, but has not profited by the observation (6–10); therefore Israel is less guilty (11) and will enjoy God's pardon first (12); only later will mercy be shown to Judah (13–18).

The Imminent Doom of Judah and Jerusalem, 4. 5—6. 30. Chapters 4. 5—6. 30 form a series of warn-

ings. A foe approaching from the north is about to administer punishment to Judah. Jeremiah's patriotic soul is deeply stirred; he urges the people to take refuge in the fortresses, while he bewails at the same time the siege of the holy city (5–18). The whole land is made desolate (19–29), and there is no one to deliver (30, 31).

In chapters 5 and 6 the scene changes to Jerusalem. Jehovah would be glad to save the city, but he cannot, for all, high and low alike, are corrupt (5. 1–9). The destroyer is to have full sway; only he will not be permitted to make a complete end of Judah and Jerusalem (10–19). The people are spiritually blind and rebellious at heart, therefore Jehovah must punish (20–29). The religious leaders are largely responsible for the present corruption (30, 31). Chapter 6 describes the judgment as still nearer: Jerusalem is in danger, and its inhabitants must flee (1–5); the moral corruption and obstinacy make destruction inevitable (6–21). The chapter closes with a new announcement of judgment (22–26) and a description of the moral degeneracy responsible for it (27–30).

Condemnation of the Hypocrisy of Judah, Chapters 7–10. In chapters 7–10 judgment is pronounced upon the hypocrisy of Judah. Standing at the gate of the temple (7. 1, 2), Jeremiah warns the people against putting their trust in the temple; the only way of escape is repentance and the practice of righteousness (3–7). Unless they repent Zion will be destroyed like Shiloh of old, and Judah will go the way of Israel (8–20). In the rest of chapter 7 and in chapter 8 the appeal is made anew. Jehovah has made known to them his requirements through the prophets (21–26),

but they have refused to listen (27, 28), therefore the land shall become a waste (29–34). Even the bodies of the dead will be dishonored (8. 1–3). The people rush headlong to destruction, showing less sense than the birds of heaven (4–7); they boast in their own wisdom but they are foolish, and soon all manner of calamities shall befall them (8–17). Gladly would the prophet see the salvation of his people, and his heart comes nigh breaking as he comes to realize that there is no physician (8. 18—9. 1). Since he cannot help he wishes that he might leave his people, for they are hopelessly corrupt, and therefore doomed (9. 2–22; 10. 17–22). In agony of spirit he once more intercedes for his people (10. 23–25). Chapter 10. 17 is the natural continuation of 9. 22. Between the two verses are three oracles independent of one another and of their context. The first (9. 23, 24) points out that Jehovah is the only true object of confidence; the second (9. 25, 26) announces judgment upon the uncircumcised in heart and flesh; the third (10. 1–16) warns the house of Israel against putting its trust in idols; Jehovah alone has the power to help.

Disregard of Jehovah's Will the Cause of Judah's Overthrow, Chapters 11, 12. A new section begins with 11. 1. Jeremiah is commissioned to exhort the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem to "hear the words of this covenant"—probably the law promulgated by King Josiah in 621—"and do them" (1–8). When at a later time they return to their iniquity he reaffirms the certainty of the divine judgment (9–13). He is warned not to intercede for his people (14), for their destruction is decreed (15–17). In verses 18ff. Jeremiah relates how he discovered a plot of his townsmen

at Anathoth against his life and how he announced judgment upon the conspirators (18–23). When the judgment is delayed he complains to Jehovah (12. 1–4), but is informed that severer tests of his faith are yet to come (5, 6).

In 12. 7–13, belonging probably to a later period in Jeremiah's life, follows a poem bewailing the desolation of the land, but a hope of restoration is held out to Judah and her neighbors, provided they will repent and turn to Jehovah (14–17).

The Corruption of the People and the Approaching Judgment, Chapter 13. Chapter 13 deals with the corruption of the people and the approaching judgment. The symbolical act of hiding the girdle was intended to illustrate the hopeless condition of the people (1–11); therefore they must suffer punishment (12–14). The prophet once more exhorts the people to repentance (15–17); but convinced that his words will not be heeded he immediately proceeds to announce the fall of the throne and the horrors of exile (18–27).

Intercession in Vain; Jeremiah Comforted by Jehovah, Chapters 14, 15. Chapters 14–17 may be grouped together, though the connection between the separate utterances is rather loose. A drought is distressing Judah (14. 1–6), in which Jeremiah sees an expression of the divine wrath (7). He prays for mercy (7–9), but is informed that the sins of the people make intercession in vain (10–12). His plea that the people have been led astray by the prophets (13) does not alter the attitude of Jehovah, who replies that prophets and people will perish (14–18). When the prophet renews his prayer (19–22) he is told that not even the prayers of Moses or Samuel could avert the doom (15. 1–9).

Whereupon, in a bold and striking poem, he complains of his fate, but is assured that Jehovah will stand by him and give him the victory in the end (10–21).

Jehovah the Only Hope of Israel, Chapters 16, 17. Jeremiah is forbidden to marry and raise a family (16. 1, 2), for nothing but disaster and death is in store for the nation (16. 3—17. 4). Jehovah is the only hope of Israel (5–13). The prophet prays that Jehovah will deliver him from his enemies and visit judgment upon his persecutors (14–18). Chapter 17. 19–27 is a plea for strict Sabbath observance.

Discourses Suggested by the Sight of the Potter's Wheel and the Broken Jar, Chapters 18, 19. Chapters 18, 19 contain discourses suggested by the sight of the potter's wheel and the broken jar. Prophecy is conditional, its fulfillment depending upon the people's attitude toward the prophetic message (18. 1–10); hence the repentance of the hearers may avert the threatened disaster (11); on the other hand, their stubbornness will make doom inevitable (12–17). The people resent Jeremiah's teaching and plan to do him harm (18), and the prophet prays that Jehovah will frustrate their schemes and execute vengeance upon them (19–23). By the symbolical act of breaking an earthen vessel in the valley of the son of Hinnom the prophet illustrates the completeness of the divine judgment (19. 1–13).

Jeremiah's Imprisonment and Complaint, Chapter 20. The repetition of the same message in the temple (19. 14, 15) leads to the prophet's imprisonment (20. 1, 2). On his release he pronounces a sentence of exile upon Pashur, who imprisoned him, and upon the whole people (3–6). The rest of the chapter contains an out-

burst of deepest feelings, in which Jeremiah bewails his trials, expresses the conviction that his persecutors will get their deserts, and curses the day of his birth (7–18).

The Inevitable Destruction of Jerusalem, 21. 1-10. Chapter 21. 1–10 records the inquiry of King Zedekiah concerning the outcome of the siege of Jerusalem and Jeremiah's reply: It shall be given into the hands of the enemy and burned with fire.

Judgments upon Contemporary Rulers, 21. 11—23. 8. In chapters 21. 11—23. 8 are recorded judgments upon several kings, who were contemporaries of Jeremiah. The first utterance (21. 11–14) is intended for the "house of David" in general, as an exhortation to practice justice. Chapter 22. 1–9 is addressed to some particular ruler, not named. It also is a plea for the execution of righteousness and justice, and a warning against injustice. The prophet then bewails the fate of Shallum (Jehoahaz), who was carried to Egypt after a brief reign (10–12); he contrasts Jehoiakim's oppressive methods with the beneficent rule of Josiah and pronounces a terrible judgment upon him (13–19); in a similar manner he denounces Jehoiachin and threatens his exile (20–30). The condemnation of the faithless shepherds or rulers is summarized in 23. 1, 2, which is followed by a promise of ultimate restoration and a picture of the rule of the ideal king, which will form a marked contrast to that of the rulers with whom Jeremiah was familiar (3–8).

Condemnation of False Prophets, 23. 9–40. Chapter 23. 9–40 is a condemnation of the false prophets, because of their immoralities (9–15), their unwarranted optimism (16–22), and their deception of the people (23–40).

Vision of the Two Baskets of Figs and its Significance, Chapter 24. Chapter 24, which belongs to the time after the first deportation, contains the vision of the two baskets of figs (1–3). By the use of the figure of the good and bad figs Jeremiah teaches that the Jews who were carried into exile with Jehoiachin are much better than those who are still in the land, and their ultimate destiny will be far happier (4–10).

The Chaldean Supremacy to Continue for Seventy Years, Chapter 25. Chapter 25 belongs to the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the year in which Nebuchadnezzar defeated the Egyptians at Carchemish. Jeremiah declares that Judah and the neighboring nations will be subdued by the king of Babylon and serve him for seventy years (1–11); at the end of that period his kingdom will come to an end (12–14). Under the figure of the drinking of the wine of wrath he announces that all the nations of the then known world will be included in the doom (15–38).

Jeremiah's Preaching, Imprisonment, and Deliverance; Death of Uriah, Chapter 26. In the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign Jeremiah warns the people that, unless they repent, the temple and the holy city will be destroyed (26. 1–7). Whereupon he was seized by the professional prophets and priests and the people (8, 9), who denounced him before the princes as deserving death (10, 11). After a brief defense by the prophet (12–15) the princes and elders declared that speaking in the name of Jehovah is not a crime (16–19), and Jeremiah escaped death (24). Uriah, a prophet of Jehovah like Jeremiah, was not so fortunate (20–23).

Conflicts with False Prophets, Chapters 27, 28. Chapters 27–29 describe the calm attitude of Jeremiah

during the early years of Zedekiah's reign. He frustrates an attempt made by the surrounding nations to involve Judah in a revolt against Nebuchadnezzar, and insists that Jehovah has decreed that all the nations of the earth shall become subject to the king of Babylon (27. 1–15). Prophets who announce the speedy downfall of Babylon are liars, for its conquests will continue (16–22). The chief representative of the lying prophets seems to have been Hananiah, who promised the restoration of the first exiles within two years (28. 1–4). Jeremiah opposes him, and declares that he will die within a year, because he has spoken rebellion against Jehovah (5–16), which threat is fulfilled (17).

Jeremiah's Letter to the Exiles, Chapter 29. The promises held out by the false prophets became known among the first exiles in Babylonia and caused much unrest. To calm them Jeremiah wrote a letter (29. 1–3), in which he urged them to settle down contentedly, for there would be no restoration until the seventy years had been accomplished (4–23). The letter aroused the resentment of the false prophets among the exiles, and one of them, Shemaiah, sent word to Jerusalem, urging Jeremiah's arrest (24–29), but the latter warns the exiles against putting any confidence in Shemaiah's promises (30–32).

Restoration from Exile and the Establishment of the New Covenant, Chapters 30, 31. Chapters 30–33 contain a collection of prophecies dealing with Israel's restoration (30. 1–3). Though the present crisis is severe (4–7), Jehovah will save a remnant and restore it to honor and glory (8–11). Judah's hurt may seem incurable, nevertheless Jehovah will heal even the most serious wounds and restore perfect

health (12–17). He will bring back the captives, who will be again his people, and he will be their God (18–24). Ephraim (31. 1–9) as well as Judah (10–14) will be restored, for Jehovah loves his people with an everlasting love. Rachel, now weeping over her children, may wipe her tears, for Ephraim will surely repent and turn to Jehovah (15–19), and in the end Judah and Ephraim will return together (20–30). Between the restored nation and Jehovah a new covenant will be established, "a covenant which is to consist not in an external system of laws, but in a law written in the heart, a principle operating from within, filling all men with the knowledge of Jehovah, and prompting them to immediate and spontaneous obedience" (31–34). The fulfillment of these promises is as certain as the ordinances of nature (35–37). In the new age the city of Jehovah will expand in every direction (38–40).

Certainty of the Restoration; the Blessings Awaiting the Purified Remnant, Chapters 32, 33. During a period of imprisonment (32. 1–5) Jeremiah purchased a field in Anathoth as an expression of his conviction of an ultimate restoration (6–15). When his faith began to waver (16–25) Jehovah explained to him the course of events in the near future: The people's disobedience will make an exile inevitable (26–35), but the restoration is equally certain (36–44). In chapter 33 the prophet depicts once more the purification and restoration of the nation (1–13). This accomplished, the ideal ruler will appear (14–18). The covenant will abide forever (19–26).

The Doom of Jerusalem Due to the People's Faithlessness, Chapters 34, 35. Chapter 34 is independent

of the preceding section. Zedekiah is told that the city will be taken and that he will be carried into exile, but his life will be spared (1–7). The fate is well deserved, because the people have dealt treacherously with the Hebrew slaves, whom they emancipated under the stress of the siege, but reënslaved when the siege was temporarily raised (8–22). Chapter 35 records the fidelity of the Rechabites to their vows (1–11), which the prophet contrasts with the people's lack of fidelity to Jehovah (12–19).

Origin of the Book of Jeremiah, Chapter 36. The long section which follows (chapters 36–45) is almost entirely of an historical nature and has been called "A History of Jeremiah." We are told how Jeremiah dictated his prophecies to Baruch, who inscribed them in a roll (36. 1–5). At the prophet's command he read this roll in the temple (6–10) and later before the princes (11–19). When the report of it reached the king's ears he ordered it read in his presence (20–22). But after a few leaves had been read he seized it and threw it into the fire (23–26). At the divine command the roll was rewritten with some additions (27–32).

Jeremiah and Zedekiah, 37. 1—38. 28. Chapter 37 takes us again to the reign of Zedekiah (1, 2). The approach of the Pharaoh's army caused the temporary raise of the siege of Jerusalem (3–5), nevertheless Jeremiah warns the king against trusting in the king of Egypt (6–10). Later the prophet is accused of desertion and imprisoned (11–16). During a secret interview with Zedekiah he reaffirms previous threats; he also prays for a change in prison quarters, which is granted (17–21). For announcing the destruction of the city Jeremiah is thrown into a dungeon (38. 1–6),

from which he is released at the king's command (7–13). In another secret interview Zedekiah is urged to surrender to the Chaldeans, because only so can he save his life (14–23). Jeremiah remains in the court of the guard until the capture of Jerusalem (24–28a).

Jeremiah and Gedaliah, 38. 28—41. 18. When Jerusalem was taken (38. 28b—39. 10) Jeremiah was spared (11–18). Verses 15–18 contain a promise that Ebed-melech will be saved. The prophet is given the choice between remaining with the new governor, Gedaliah, and going with the exiles; and he prefers the former (40. 1–6). An era of prosperity dawns under Gedaliah (7–12), but after a few months he is murdered by Ishmael (40. 13—41. 3), who then takes captive the inhabitants of Mizpah and carries them to Ammon (4–10), where they are rescued by Johanan (11–18).

Jeremiah Taken to Egypt against his Will, Chapters 42–44. The surviving Jews appeal to Jeremiah for advice (42. 1–6), who assures them of the divine protection, provided they remain in the land (7–12), but if they flee to Egypt disaster will overtake them (13–22). In spite of this warning they go to Egypt and compel Jeremiah to accompany them (43. 1–7). While in Egypt Jeremiah announces the conquest of that land by Nebuchadnezzar (8–10). In Egypt the Jews relapse into idolatry, for which the prophet rebukes them (44. 1–14). The people reply that when they worshiped Jehovah it was ill with them; on the other hand, when they practiced idolatry they had plenty, therefore they will not hearken to him (15–19). Whereupon Jeremiah renews his warnings and informs the people that few of them will return to Judah (20–30).

Encouragement of Baruch, Chapter 45. Chapter 45 is a supplement to 36. 1–8. It is a message to Baruch, whose courage was failing. He is told that it is not a time to expect great things for himself; he must be content if his life is spared.

Prophecies Concerning Foreign Nations, Chapters 46–51. Chapters 46–51 contain prophecies against foreign nations (46. 1). The first is against Egypt (2). Following an ode over the defeat of Pharaoh-neco at Carchemish (3–12), the prophet predicts the victorious invasion of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar (13–26). This is followed by words of comfort addressed to Israel (27, 28; almost identical with 30. 10, 11). Philistia is warned that an enemy will come from the north, who will wholly waste the land. The devastation will affect also Tyre and Sidon (chap. 47).

The long prophecy in chapter 48 is directed against Moab, whose utter destruction is announced. A similar fate is awaiting Ammon (49. 1–6). Edom also is doomed (7–22). Damascus, seized with trembling, will be taken and her warriors slain (23–27). Kedar and Hazor will be scattered (28–33), and a similar fate will befall Elam (34–39).

The climax is the oracle against Babylon (50. 1—51. 58). A nation is approaching from the north, to make an end of her power, that the exiles may be delivered. Again and again the prophet bids the foe to begin the fray, while he exhorts the exiles to escape from the doomed city, in whose downfall he rejoices.

This prophecy is followed by a brief historical section (51. 59–64), which states that Jeremiah sent to Babylon a roll containing a curse upon the city, with

the command that it be read there and then sunk in the Euphrates.

Closing Days of Jerusalem; Kind Treatment of Jehoiachin, Chapter 52. Chapter 52 contains an account of the reign of Zedekiah (1–3), his rebellion and the subsequent capture of the city (4–11), the burning of the holy city and the carrying away of the exiles and of the temple treasures (12–30). It closes with an account of the kindly treatment accorded to Jehoiachin by Evil-merodach (31–34).

THE TEACHING OF JEREMIAH

Agreement of Jeremiah with His Predecessors. Jeremiah was the prophet of the fall of Jerusalem. His message is in the main one of doom; only rarely does there appear a ray of light. In his conception of the character of Jehovah he is in perfect accord with his predecessors in the prophetic office. Jehovah is the one God, righteous and just, pure and holy, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and yet sure to visit upon evil-doers their sins. However, it is not in an abstract manner that Jeremiah discusses the divine character, but rather in its bearing upon Jehovah's relation to Judah, which is the subject of all his preaching.

Israel in a Peculiar Sense the People of Jehovah. Like Hosea, Jeremiah starts out with the conviction that his countrymen are in a peculiar sense the people of Jehovah. They had become such by divine choice. It was Jehovah who brought them out of Egypt, led them through the wilderness, and established them in the promised land, where they might live in prosperity (2. 6, 7). He had also looked after their spiritual needs: "I have sent unto you all my servants the prophets,

daily rising up early and sending them" (7. 25). Like Hosea, Jeremiah describes the intimate relation between Jehovah and Israel under the two figures of marriage and filial relation. He calls the early affection of Israel the love of her espousals (2. 2), and he places in the mouth of Jehovah these words: "I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn" (31. 9).

Israel's Apostasy. But Israel proved faithless. In the beginning "Israel was holiness unto Jehovah" (2. 3), but it soon forsook him (3. 1), walked after vanity, and became vain (2. 5; compare also verses 7, 8, 12, 13, 21). The faithlessness showed itself in the practice of idolatry (3. 1); in the temple itself they set up their abominations (7. 30). Some who were not attracted by idolatry became skeptics or practical atheists; they doubted the righteousness or even the reality of the divine government of the world (5. 12). Religious apostasy was accompanied by moral apostasy. Crimes and vices of various sorts were openly practiced; goodness was almost unknown. "As a well casteth forth its waters, so she casteth forth her wickedness: violence and destruction is heard in her; before me continually is sickness and wounds" (6. 7; compare 5. 1, 26–28; 6. 13; 9. 2ff.; etc.).

Israel's Self-righteousness. As in the days of the earlier prophets, the people, in spite of their religious and moral apostasy, entertained a feeling of perfect security and self-righteousness. Many believed that in view of their painstaking observance of the external ceremonial they had a claim upon the divine favor, and that Jehovah was bound to stand by them. In this attitude of mind they found it easy to exaggerate Isaiah's doctrine of the inviolability of Zion and to

put their trust in the external temple (7. 4). Nor is it any wonder that in this spirit they should resent the denunciations of Jeremiah and consider him a fanatical disturber of the peace (8. 8, 12; 18. 18). Their spiritual sensibilities had become dulled and their consciences had become seared. Therefore they failed to understand the significance of the divinely sent chastisements: "Wherefore hath Jehovah our God done all these things unto us?" (5. 19; 16. 10).

Jeremiah severely condemns this self-complacency and blind trust in the externals of religion. The promise that the presence of the temple will save them he calls "lying words" (7. 4); and he declares the whole sacrificial system to be an abomination to Jehovah (6. 20). "Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods that ye have not known, and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered; that ye may do all these abominations? Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it, saith Jehovah" (7. 9–11).

Threats of Judgment. It is the apparent hopelessness of the situation that is responsible for the many announcements and threats of judgment. From 1. 10, which contains the commission of the prophet, to the end of the book the somber note of judgment predominates. In the prophecies belonging to the earlier period a note of hope is still discernible. Judah may yet repent; if so, the severest blow may be averted. Therefore the prophet frequently exhorts the people to repent: "Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to Jehovah,

and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem; lest my wrath go forth like fire, and burn so that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings" (4. 3, 4; compare 6. 8; 7. 3; etc.). But when the years passed without any improvement in the people, and especially after the accession of Jehoiakim, Jeremiah came to abandon the expectation of any kind of general response on the part of the obdurate nation. "But they say, It is in vain; for we will walk after our own devices, and we will do every one after the stubbornness of his evil heart" (18. 12). He became convinced that Jehovah's patience was exhausted and that the time of mercy was past. He must no longer pray for mercy; justice must have her way. "Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me; for I will not hear thee" (7. 16; 14. 12). Yea, though Moses and Samuel should intercede, they could not change Jehovah's purpose to cast the people out of his sight (15. 1). In the immediate future the prophet could see nothing but death and destruction: "Such as are for death (shall go forth) to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for captivity, to captivity."

Promises of a Future Restoration. From the sins of the present and the judgments which he expects to fall in the near future Jeremiah frequently turns to the more remote future. He saw beyond the night of calamity and distress the dawn of a brighter day. The eternal purpose of divine grace must yet be realized. The nation may perish, but the kingdom of God must endure. Promises of restoration are scattered throughout the

entire book, but they are especially numerous in chapters 30–33, which have been called a "Book of Consolation." The following are the most important features of the future glory which are emphasized by Jeremiah:

1. *The Preservation of a Remnant.* Like the other prophets, Jeremiah believes that the divine judgments have a disciplinary purpose. The whole nation must suffer in exile, but among the exiles are some who have remained and will remain faithful to Jehovah. These faithful ones, who constitute the true Israel, will survive the calamity, and will be saved as the nucleus of the new kingdom of God (4. 27; 5. 10, 18; 29. 11; 30. 11; 46. 28).

2. *The Restoration from Exile.* These faithful servants of Jehovah, saved from destruction, will in due time be restored to their old home. The period of exile will be seventy years (25. 11). At the end of this period the power of Babylon will be broken (25. 12–14); and the hour of Babylon's downfall will be the time of the exiles' restoration (30. 7–11). The return from exile will be so glorious that it will cast the wonderful deliverance from Egypt into the shade (16. 14, 15). North and south will share the glories of the restoration (3. 12, 21, 22); for the divine father-heart yearns with compassion for the whole people (chapter 31). Since only the faithful will be brought back, the land of Judah and the cities thereof may again be called the "habitation of righteousness" and the "mountain of holiness" (31. 23).

3. *The New Jerusalem.* The present Jerusalem is corrupt and, therefore, must be destroyed; but as out of the ashes of the old nation a new nation will

emerge, so, the prophet is convinced, out of the ruins of the old city a new city will arise, to serve as the dwelling place of Jehovah and a suitable religious center for the returned exiles. The new Jerusalem will be free from the corruptions of the present city: "And this is the name whereby she shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness" (33. 16).

4. *The Ideal King.* In the new city and over the redeemed remnant an ideal king will rule. The throne of David had been disgraced by a succession of worthless kings, who had hurried Judah to its ruin. In the era of restoration all this will be changed: "And I will set up shepherds over them, who shall feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed" (23. 4). The chief ruler will be a descendant of David: "I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness" (23. 5, 6). In 30. 9 the ideal ruler is called David, which means, that he will be a second David, a man after God's own heart and a true representative of Jehovah. He is also represented as having free access to God (30. 21).

5. *The New Covenant.* An important element in the teaching of Jeremiah is the establishment of a new covenant, a covenant of pardon and grace. The covenant made at Mount Sinai had failed to accomplish its purpose. Israel had become apostate; "they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but walked every one in the stubbornness of their evil heart" (11. 8; 31. 32). This was due to a serious defect inherent in the old

covenant. "It was powerless to secure the obedience it enjoined; it was burdensome as a law of positive precepts and ordinances; in relation to the removal of sin it was hopelessly ineffective." An effective covenant is not imposed from without: it is the outgrowth of mutual affection, and such affection can exist only where there is identity of ideals and purpose. The shortcomings of the old covenant will be removed in the new. "I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more" (31. 33, 34). And again, "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from following them, to do them good; and I will put my fear in their hearts, that they may not depart from me" (32. 40). The prophet, then, looks for a new covenant of grace, which is the outgrowth of the divine love, and is preceded by an act of pardon and cleansing: "I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned against me, and whereby they have transgressed against me" (33. 8). The new covenant will be an everlasting covenant, uniting Jehovah and his people forever. Such it can be because the immediate and experimental knowledge of God, which is to be enjoyed by all, will prove an ever-active motive for goodness and righteousness.

6. *Spirituality of Religion.* Jeremiah's teaching

concerning the nature and character of the new covenant gives evidence of his deeply spiritual conception of religion, which appears also in other connections. In former days the national aspect of religion was emphasized; and this naturally gave a large place to forms and institutions which might be national in their use and benefits. Jeremiah saw that the national life of Judah was rapidly nearing its close, and with it would disappear the holy city, the temple, and other institutions that were closely bound up with the religious life of the past. Religion, to prepare it for this crisis, must be denationalized, it must be individualized and spiritualized. Important as are his other contributions to the body of religious truth, his teaching on this subject is of the greatest permanent value. Here he passes beyond his predecessors in the direction of the teaching of Jesus. With Jeremiah religion is an immediate, personal relationship between Jehovah and the individual soul, and heart obedience and devotion of the individual to his God. When all individuals enjoy this personal fellowship, then a similar relationship becomes possible between Jehovah and the redeemed remnant as a whole. "I will give them a heart to know me, that I am Jehovah: and they shall be my people and I will be their God; and they shall return unto me with their whole heart" (24. 7).

7. *Personal Responsibility.* The individualization of religion implies the doctrine of personal responsibility. With the sense of individuality lost, persons might think that they were punished for the sins of others, sins committed either by some of their contemporaries or by their ancestors. Jeremiah knew that there were those who said, "The fathers have

eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge" (31. 29). Conscious personal fellowship with God involves a deeper sense of individual responsibility. Men will begin to realize that every one is responsible for his own conduct. "Every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge" (31. 30).

8. *Salvation of the Nations.* It follows naturally from such teaching that the salvation of the nations outside of Israel does not depend upon membership in the nation Israel, but upon their own relation to the true God. When, as a result of the wonderful manifestations of Jehovah, they come to recognize him as the true God, then they too will find their place among the redeemed. "Unto thee shall the nations come from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Our fathers have inherited naught but lies, even vanity and things wherein there is no profit" (16. 19; compare 3. 17; 4. 2; 33. 9).

9. *Disappearance of External Symbols.* When the immediate presence of Jehovah is realized the people may discard the emblems peculiar to the old religion. This thought is expressed most clearly in the announcement that the need of the ark will no longer be felt: "When ye are multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith Jehovah, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of Jehovah; neither shall it come to mind; neither shall they remember it; neither shall they miss it; neither shall it be made any more" (3. 16). The ark was the symbol of the presence of Jehovah; but when Jehovah himself is in the midst of the people, and his presence is realized in the lives and experiences of his worshipers, no one will care for the symbols of his presence.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CONTEMPORARIES OF JEREMIAH

I. ZEPHANIAH

THE PERSONAL LIFE OF THE PROPHET ZEPHANIAH

Occasion and Date of the Prophecy. The earliest of Jeremiah's contemporaries was Zephaniah. The occasion of his prophesying seems to have been the appearance of the Scythians, to which reference is made on p. 129. At the time his message was delivered their advance against Egypt was still in the future, though imminent. The prophet considered the Scythians the executioners of the divine judgment upon his sinful countrymen and upon the surrounding nations, and he saw in the coming of the mysterious hosts the harbinger of the day of Jehovah. If this was the occasion, the prophet's urgent calls to repentance and threats of judgment may be assigned, with considerable assurance, to the years between 630 and 625 B. C., perhaps 626, the year in which Jeremiah began his prophetic ministry.

The Ancestry of Zephaniah. Practically nothing is known of the prophet's personal history. In 1. 1 his ancestry is traced back four generations. Since it is not customary in the Old Testament to trace a man's ancestry back so far, it has been inferred from this exception to the general rule that the last mentioned ancestor of Zephaniah was a man of prominence—indeed, no other than King Hezekiah of Judah, the contemporary of Isaiah and Micah. If the prophet was

of royal blood his condemnation of the royal princes (1. 8), with whose conduct he was evidently familiar (1. 8ff), becomes of great interest. In a similar manner Isaiah, who is thought to have been of royal descent, condemned the shortcomings and vices of the rulers and the court. That Zephaniah lived in Jerusalem is made probable by his reference to the holy city as "*this* place" (1. 4), and by his intimate knowledge of the topography of the city (1. 10, 11).

Length of Zephaniah's Activity. For how long he continued his ministry we do not know; it is not improbable, however, that, as was the case with Amos, his public activity was short, and that, after delivering his message of judgment in connection with a great political crisis, he retired to private life, though his interest in religious reforms may have continued (2 Kings 23. 2).

THE MESSAGE OF ZEPHANIAH

The Book of Zephaniah falls naturally into two parts of unequal length. The first part (1. 2—3. 7) contains almost exclusively denunciations and threats; the second (3. 8–20), a promise of salvation and glorification.

The Judgment upon Judah and Jerusalem, Chapter 1. The prophecy opens with an announcement of a world judgment (1. 2, 3), which will be particularly severe upon Judah and Jerusalem (4), because they "have not sought Jehovah nor inquired after him"; instead they have practiced idolatrous rites of various kinds (4–6). The ungodly nobles will suffer most, because they are arrogant and practice oppression, violence, and deceit (8, 9). The judgment is imminent (7). When it comes, cries of agony and despair will be heard everywhere (10, 11). No one will escape;

even the indifferent skeptics will be aroused by the terrible character of the judgment (12, 13). In the succeeding verses the imminence and terribleness of the day of Jehovah is enlarged upon. It "is near and hasteth greatly" (14), it is a day of darkness without a ray of light (15), and a day of battle (16). The calamity will throw the inhabitants into helpless confusion, so that they will stagger like blind men and fall an easy prey to the enemy (17), who will show them no mercy. All this will come to pass because Jehovah has determined to "make an end, yea, a terrible end, of all them that dwell in the land" (18).

Exhortation to Repentance, 2. 1–3. The message of judgment is followed by an exhortation to repentance (2. 1–3). Aroused by the indifference of the listeners, the prophet pleads with them to give some evidence of repentance (1), else they will be swept away like chaff before the wind (2). One way of escape is offered to the meek, namely, to "seek Jehovah." If they do this they may be "hid in the day of Jehovah" (3).

Judgment upon Foreign Nations, 2. 4–15. The next section (2. 4–15) contains threats of judgment upon five nations. Philistia will be destroyed so completely that no inhabitant will be left (4–7). On account of their pride and arrogance Moab and Ammon will become like Sodom and Gomorrah (8–10). The terrible manifestation of Jehovah's power will reveal the nothingness of the deities worshiped by other nations, and all men will render homage to the God of Israel (11). Ethiopia in the south will feel the divine wrath (12); but the severest blow will fall upon Assyria and its capital Nineveh (13–15).

The Judgment and its Effects, 3. 1–13. In 3. 1 the prophet turns once more to Jerusalem, "the rebellious and unclean, the city of oppression." Her princes are thieves, her prophets "bold jugglers instead of God's witnesses," her priests profane that which is holy (1–4). Jehovah has done all he could to win the city back to purity, but in vain; her inhabitants corrupted all their doings (5–7). Since all warnings have failed the judgment, which will involve Judah with the other nations, is inevitable (8). A remnant will escape, and it is exhorted to remain loyal amid the imminent convulsions, because the future has brighter things in store. The judgment will result in the conversion of a choice portion of the nations of the earth (9, 10). This company, with the redeemed and purified remnant of Judah, will find rest and peace in Jehovah (11–13).

The Joy of the Redeemed Daughter of Zion, 3. 14–20. The closing section, which is by many denied to Zephaniah, pictures the joy of the redeemed daughter of Zion. In 14–17 she is urged to rejoice mightily, because Jehovah has redeemed her and now rules in the midst of her. In 18–20 Jehovah promises to the restored community deliverance from all foes, the removal of all reproach, the restoration of the dispersed, and the exaltation of the faithful among the nations of the earth.

THE TEACHING OF ZEPHANIAH

Zephaniah and the Earlier Prophets. The theology of Zephaniah closely resembles that of the earlier prophetic books. Jehovah is the God of the universe, a God of righteousness and holiness, who expects of his worshipers a life in accord with his will. Israel is his chosen people, but on account of its rebellion it must

suffer severe punishment. Wholesale conversion seems out of the question, but a remnant may be "hid in the day of Jehovah's anger," and this remnant will be exalted among the nations. In his emphasis of these and similar truths Zephaniah follows in the footsteps of his predecessors, especially in those of Isaiah. He adds little, but attempts with much spiritual and moral fervor to impress upon his contemporaries the fundamental truths of the religion of Jehovah.

The Day of Jehovah. There are, however, a few points in the teaching of the Book of Zephaniah which deserve special mention. In the first place, the emphasis upon the day of Jehovah. Earlier prophets had spoken of it; Amos (5. 18–20) had described it in language similar to that employed by Zephaniah; but the latter surpasses all his predecessors in the emphasis he places upon this terrible manifestation of Jehovah. His entire teaching centers around this day, and in the Book of Zephaniah we find the germs of the apocalyptic visions which became so common in later prophecies of an eschatological character. Concerning this day he says (1) that it is a day of terror (1. 15); (2) it is imminent (1. 14); (3) it comes as a judgment for sin (1. 17); (4) it falls upon all creation, man and beast, Hebrew and foreigner (1. 2, 3; 2. 4–15; 3. 8); (5) it is accompanied by great convulsions in nature (1. 15); (6) a remnant consisting of redeemed Hebrews and foreigners will escape from its terrors (2. 3; 3. 9–13).

Zephaniah's Universalism. The vision of the book is world-wide. The terrors of the day of Jehovah will fall upon all, and in the same manner, from all the nations of the earth converts will be won to Jehovah, who will bring offerings to him (3. 9, 10). In 2. 11,

"Men shall worship him, every one from his place," Zephaniah takes a step in advance of the expectation expressed in Mic. 4. 1; Isa. 2. 2, "all nations shall flow unto it," that is, Jerusalem. He moves in the direction of the utterance of Jesus, "The hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father" (John 4. 21). Though the prophet draws a sublime picture of the glories of the Messianic age (3. 14–20), he says not a word concerning the person of the Messianic king. Whatever is accomplished is accomplished by Jehovah himself.

II. NAHUM

THE PERSONAL HISTORY OF NAHUM

Date of Nahum. Nahum is the prophet of Nineveh's doom. The whole book centers around the fall and destruction of that city. Since the capture of the city is represented as still in the future, it seems evident that the prophecies were delivered some time before 607–606, the year in which the city was destroyed. Thus the latest possible date of Nahum's activity is fixed. The earliest possible date also is indicated by internal evidence. In 3. 8ff. the prophet speaks of the capture and destruction of No-Amon, the Egyptian Thebes, as an accomplished fact. The expedition of Ashurbanapal, king of Assyria, against Egypt, which resulted in the fall of Thebes, occurred about 663 B. C. Hence the activity of Nahum must be placed somewhere between 663 and 607.

As to the exact period between the two dates there is disagreement among scholars. One thing is made quite clear by the prophecy itself, namely, that at the time the words were spoken or written Nineveh was

passing through some grave crisis. Now we know that during the second half of the seventh century B. C. Assyria was threatened three times: (1) The revolt of Shamashshumukin of Babylon against his brother, the king of Assyria, 650–648 B. C. (2) The invasion of Assyria and threatened attack upon Nineveh by some unknown foe, perhaps the Scythians, about 625 B. C. (3) The final attack, which resulted in the fall and destruction of Nineveh in 607–606 B. C.

The first crisis does not offer a suitable occasion for Nahum's prophecy, because at that time the city of Nineveh was not in any danger. Little is known concerning the second crisis, and it is not possible either to prove or to disprove that it gave rise to the book. On the other hand, the years immediately preceding the downfall of Nineveh offer a most suitable occasion. The struggle continued for about two years. The united forces of the Chaldeans and Scythians met determined resistance; at last a breach was made in the northeast corner of the wall, the city was taken, pillaged, and burned. Judah had suffered much from the proud Assyrian, and it is not difficult to understand how, with the doom of the cruel oppressor imminent, a prophet-patriot might burst into shouts of exultation and triumph over the distress of the cruel foe. "If," says A. B. Davidson, "the distress of Nineveh referred to were the final one, the descriptions of the prophecy would acquire a reality and naturalness which they otherwise want, and the general characteristics of Hebrew prophecy would be more truly conserved." There seems to be good reason, therefore, for assigning Nahum's activity to a date between 610 and 607 B. C.

The Home of Nahum. Of the personal life of Nahum we know practically nothing. In 1. 1 he is called "the Elkoshite," that is, an inhabitant of Elkosh. Unfortunately, the location of this place is not known. One tradition, which cannot be traced beyond the sixteenth century A. D., identifies the home of Nahum with a modern village Elkush, or Alkosh, not far from the left bank of the Tigris, two days' journey north of the site of ancient Nineveh. A second tradition, which is at least as old as the days of Jerome, the latter part of the fourth century, locates Elkosh in Galilee, at a place identified by many with the modern El-Kauze, near Ramieh. Others identify the home of the prophet with the city of Capernaum, whose name means, Village of Nahum. A fourth tradition, which is first found in a collection of traditions entitled "Lives of the Prophets," says, "Nahum was from Elkosh, beyond Bet Gabre, of the tribe of Simeon." A place in the south is more in harmony with the interest the prophet takes in the southern kingdom, so that the last-mentioned tradition seems to have much in its favor, but absolute certainty is not attainable.

THE MESSAGE OF NAHUM

The Book of Nahum has been called "a Pindaric ode of triumph over the oppressor's fall." This characterization is true especially of chapters 2 and 3, which describe, in forceful and picturesque language, the siege, capture, and destruction of the Assyrian city of Nineveh. Chapter 1 may be brought into close connection with the other two by interpreting it as Jehovah's decree of Nineveh's doom.

Decree of Nineveh's Doom, Chapter 1. The first section of the book (1. 2–15, to which some add

2. 2) contains the decree of Nineveh's doom. It opens with a sublime description of two aspects of the divine character: Jehovah is a God of vengeance and of mercy (2, 3). At times he may seem slack in punishing iniquity, but retribution will surely overtake the sinner; and when Jehovah does appear in judgment no one can stand before him, even heaven and earth tremble (4–6). In verse 7 the prophet turns to his real theme, and shows what bearing the two aspects of the divine character have upon the future history of Judah and Nineveh. Jehovah will be faithful toward those who rely upon him (7), but woe upon his enemies (8)! The disappointments of Judah have been many, and the prophet feels that the simple statements in 7, 8 are hardly sufficient to drive away the gloom of despair. He therefore turns to the people with the question, Do you think that Jehovah cannot or will not carry out his threat against your present enemy? This is a grievous error, for he will surely bring utter destruction upon him (9, 10). In verse 11 he turns to Nineveh, to make clear to her why her doom is decreed: she has "devised evil against Jehovah." Once more glorious deliverance is promised to Judah (12, 13), which is followed by a reiteration of the threat against Assyria (14). The destruction of the Assyrian will mean the exaltation of Judah. Already the prophet sees the messengers speeding over the mountains to tell the glad news to the hitherto oppressed people. He bids Judah to proclaim joyous feasts and pay to Jehovah the vows made in adversity (15), [for Jehovah is about to restore the excellency of Jacob (2. 2)].

Description of Nineveh's Downfall, Chapter 2. From the declaration that the doom of Nineveh is de-

creed the prophet passes to a description of the carrying out of the decree (2. 1–13). The army appointed to execute the judgment is already approaching, and the city must prepare for defense (1)—for Jehovah is about to restore the excellency of Jacob (2). In imagination the prophet beholds the terrible onslaught, the glittering weapons, the raging chariots (3, 4). Desperate efforts are made to save the city, but in vain; it falls (5, 6), the queen and her attendants are captured (7), the inhabitants flee (8), the city is sacked and left a desolation (9, 10). The prophet, gazing upon the ruins of the city, cries out exultantly, "Where is the den of the lions, and the feeding place of the young lions, where the lion and the lioness walked, the lion's whelp, and none made them afraid?" Jehovah has made an utter end thereof (11–13).

The Imminence of Nineveh's Destruction, Chapter 3. In 3. 1 the prophet turns once more to Nineveh and pronounces a woe upon the bloody city (1). Already the noise of the onslaught may be heard and the glitter of the arms may be seen (2, 3). The judgment is well deserved (4). The part of the harlot she has acted, the fate of the harlot she must endure, and no one will bemoan her (5–7). Natural strength and resources will avail no more in her case than in the case of the Egyptian No-amon (8–11). The enemy advances, the fortresses scattered throughout the land fall, while the Assyrian soldiers become feeble and cowardly (12, 13). A siege is imminent, preparations for it must be made, but all resistance will prove in vain; the city and the inhabitants will be utterly cut off (14–18); and the whole earth will rejoice because her power is departed from her (19).

THE TEACHING OF NAHUM

The Character of Jehovah. The utterances of Nahum center around a single theme, the destruction of Nineveh. As a result they contain little direct religious teaching; and what there is of it is confined very largely to the opening verses of chapter 1. These verses emphasize the twofold manifestation of the divine holiness, the divine vengeance, and the divine mercy (1. 2, 3). The manifestation of the one results in the destruction of the wicked (1. 2), the other in the salvation of the oppressed (1. 15; 2. 2). Faith in Jehovah will secure the divine favor and protection (1. 7).

Silence Concerning Judah's Sin. In one respect Nahum differs widely from his predecessors, namely, in his silence concerning the sin and guilt of Judah. The other prophets point to the present or impending distress and affliction as punishment for sin, and they insist that salvation can come only if the people repent and turn to Jehovah. "For this Nahum has no thought. His heart, for all its bigness, holds room only for the bitter memories, the baffled hopes, the unappeased hatreds of a hundred years." This silence concerning the sins of his own nation is not due to a lack of high ethical ideals or to ignorance of the people's condition, but rather to the narrowness of the prophet's purpose in delivering the message. His purpose was to point out the hand of God in the impending fall of Nineveh and the significance of the catastrophe for the oppressed Jews. To do this it was not necessary to dwell upon the shortcomings of his people.

Nahum's Glee over the Ruin of Nineveh. The fierceness of Nahum, and his glee at the thought of Nine-

veh's ruin, may not be in accord with the injunction, "Love thine enemy"; but it should be borne in mind that it is not personal hatred that prompts the prophet; he is stirred by a righteous indignation over the outrages committed by Assyria. He considers the sin and overthrow of Nineveh not merely in their bearing upon the fortunes of Judah, but in their relation to the moral government of the whole world; hence his voice gives utterance to the outraged conscience of humanity.

Universality of Jehovah's Rule. While Nahum's message, in its direct teaching, appears to be less spiritual and ethical than that of his predecessors, it sets in a clear light Jehovah's sway over the whole universe, and emphasizes the duty of nations as well as of individuals to own his sway and obey his will. This attitude alone will assure permanent peace and prosperity; on the other hand, disobedience to his purpose and disregard of his rule will surely bring calamity and distress. The emphasis of these ethical principles gives to the message of Nahum a unique significance for the present day and generation. "Assyria in his hands," says Kennedy, "becomes an object lesson to the empires of the modern world, teaching, as an eternal principle of the divine government of the world, the absolute necessity, for a nation's continued vitality, of that righteousness, personal, civic, and national, which alone exalteth a nation."

The Messianic Outlook. In a broad sense, 1. 15 is of Messianic import. The downfall of Nineveh and Assyria prepares the way for the permanent redemption and exaltation of Zion: "the wicked one shall no more pass through thee."

III. HABAKKUK

OCCASION OF THE PROPHECY

Questioning of the Divine Providence. In the Book of Habakkuk a new type of prophecy appears. The prophets were primarily preachers and teachers of religion and ethics. They addressed themselves to their fellow countrymen in an attempt to win them back to Jehovah and a righteous life. Not so Habakkuk. He addresses himself to Jehovah, questioning the justice or even the reality of the Divine Providence. He makes complaint to God and expostulates with him. The prophet Habakkuk, therefore, is a forerunner of the author of the Book of Job. "As a whole his book is the fruit of religious reflection; it exhibits the communings and questionings of his soul—representative, no doubt, of many other pious spirits of the time—with God; and records the answers which the Spirit of God taught him for his own sake and for the sake of tried souls in every age."

The Moral Background of the Prophecy. Neither the book itself nor any other part of the Old Testament throws any light on the personal history of the author. It would seem, however, that he lived under King Jehoiakim. The pious and well-meaning Josiah had been slain in an attempt to stop the advance of Egypt against Assyria. With his death the brief era of reform came to an end. After a reign of three months Jehoahaz was deposed by Pharaoh-necoh, who placed Jehoiakim on the throne. The latter was selfish, tyrannical, and godless. In a short time the deplorable conditions of Manasseh's reign returned. It was this situation that caused the prophet's first perplexity: "O Jehovah, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not

hear? I cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save" (1. 2).

The Historical Background. But the contents of the book enable us to fix the date of Habakkuk somewhat more definitely. The Chaldeans, whose advance against Judah is announced in 1. 5–11, were the successors of the Assyrians as the conquerors and possessors of Western Asia. Now, the verses referred to indicate (1) that the Chaldeans had not yet come into direct contact with Judah, and (2) that they already had given exhibitions of the cruel character of their warfare. Nebuchadnezzar made Judah tributary about 600 B. C.; hence Habakkuk must have prophesied before that date. The first real test of the Chaldean power was the battle of Carchemish, in 605–604, in which Egypt suffered a decisive defeat. From that time on, and even before that date, during the final struggle with Nineveh and against minor foes, the Chaldeans had abundant opportunities to reveal their true character, when the prophet and his contemporaries might become acquainted with this heartless successor of Nineveh. Hence the prophetic activity of Habakkuk may be assigned to a date shortly before 600 B. C.

THE MESSAGE OF HABAKKUK

The Book of Habakkuk falls naturally into three parts: (1) The prophet's twofold perplexity and the divine solutions (1. 2—2. 5); (2) A taunt-song over the downfall of the Chaldeans (2. 6–20); (3) The "prayer" of Habakkuk (chapter 3).

The First Perplexity and its Solution, 1. 1–11. The prophecy opens with a complaint about the seeming indifference of Jehovah in the presence of wide-

spread corruption in Judah. The prophet is perplexed, for he cannot reconcile this indifference with his conception of the character of Jehovah (1. 2–4). In reply Jehovah declares that judgment is about to be executed; the executioners are to be the Chaldeans (5–11).

The Second Perplexity and its Solution, 1. 12—2. 5. This announcement, instead of removing the prophet's perplexity, only intensifies it. Can a holy God condone the cruelties perpetrated by the Chaldeans? Judah, indeed, deserves punishment, but how can a pure and righteous God employ the godless Chaldeans as his executioners? Is Judah to be utterly annihilated by this monster? Is the triumph of the Chaldeans to continue forever? These and similar questions present a new problem, which taxes his faith to the utmost (12–17). But he will not permit his faith to be wrecked; he will wait until he receives a divine solution (2. 1). He does not wait in vain. Jehovah grants a solution in the form of an inner vision, which is to be made known to all. The vision is to be written down (2), because the fulfillment will be delayed until the appointed time. When it arrives the record on the tablet will testify to the truthfulness of Jehovah and of his prophet (3).

The contents of the vision are stated in brief enigmatical form: "Behold, his soul is puffed up, it is not upright in him; but the righteous shall live by his faith." The meaning of this message is that there is a moral distinction between the Chaldeans and the people of Jehovah. The one puffed up, glorying in his own might as his god, and insincere in his dealings with other nations, lacks the moral elements which alone insure permanence, while the other possesses the fidelity and moral integrity which mean permanence; he can-

not perish, but will endure forever (4). Bearing in mind this moral distinction, the prophet may rest assured that in the end the righteous Jews will triumph while the ungodly Chaldeans must perish. There follows a verse that describes more fully the character of the Chaldeans (5).

A Taunt-song over the Downfall of Babylon, 2. 6–20. The doom of the cruel oppressor is determined in the divine councils, therefore the wronged nations may begin to rejoice over his downfall. These nations the prophet introduces as taking up a taunt-song against the doomed Chaldeans. It is in the form of five woes upon the evil traits in the enemy's character and his deeds of cruelty: (1) upon lust of conquest and plunder (6–8); (2) upon rapacity (9–11); (3) upon the building of cities with the blood and property of strangers (12–14); (4) upon cruelty toward conquered kings and nations (15–17); (5) upon idolatry (18–20).

The Prayer of Habakkuk, Chapter 3. The prophecy closes with a lyrical passage (3. 1–19), called in the title "prayer." In a broad sense the entire chapter is a prayer, though only verse 2 contains a petition, "O Jehovah, revive thy work in the midst of the years; in the midst of the years make it known; in wrath remember mercy." The petitioner speaks for himself and the community. He remembers the mighty works of Jehovah for his people; the thought of them causes him to tremble; nevertheless he calls for a repetition of the ancient manifestations (2). In majestic pictures the poet describes the wonderful appearances of Jehovah in the past. He came forth in awful brightness, nature and men trembled before him, the rivers

and the sea were dried up, the sun and the moon hid themselves in terror (3–11). All this was done for his chosen people (12–15). In the remaining verses the psalmist describes his own feelings at the remembrance of these manifestations: at first, fear and trembling (16a), then joy and confidence in the God of his salvation. Whatever the temporary hardships and wants, Jehovah is his portion, and in due time will prove himself the God of his salvation (16b–19).

THE TEACHING OF HABAKKUK

Habakkuk the Prophet of Faith. Habakkuk has been called the prophet of faith. He possessed a strong, living faith in Jehovah; but he, like many other pious souls, was troubled and perplexed by the apparent inequalities of life. He found it difficult to reconcile these with his lofty conception of Jehovah. Nevertheless, he does not sulk; boldly he presents his perplexity to Jehovah, who points the way to a solution, and the prophet comes forth from his struggle with a faith stronger and more intense than ever.

We might expect that a man with such firm hold on God, and with such a living experience of God, would give expression, even in a brief book, to some great and permanent truths; and in this instance our expectations are not disappointed. Habakkuk was a contemporary of Jeremiah, but he differs from him in a marked manner. Jeremiah is forever denouncing the sins of the people; of the Chaldeans he speaks almost exclusively as the instruments of Jehovah; he has little to say about their cruelties, and does not condemn them. Habakkuk, on the other hand, devotes only three verses (1. 2–4) to the sins of Judah; and,

while recognizing the Chaldeans as instruments of Jehovah, he condemns them persistently for their wrong-doing, and the climax of the prophecy is the affirmation of their ultimate annihilation. In this the prophet resembles Nahum, who, like Habakkuk, was concerned primarily with the cruelties and the doom of the oppressor.

It is in connection with his attempts to solve the perplexing problems raised by the unpunished sins of his countrymen and the unlimited success of the Chaldeans that Habakkuk gives utterance to two sublime truths:

1. **The Universal Supremacy of Jehovah.** The latter is interested not only in Israel. Though Habakkuk, like the other prophets, believes in a special Divine Providence over Israel, he is equally convinced that Jehovah's rule embraces the whole earth; the destinies of all the nations are in his hand. The Chaldeans are punished not merely for their sins against Judah, but for the oppression of other nations as well. Being the only God, he cannot permit the worship of other deities. Temporarily the Chaldeans may worship idols, or make might their god, they may "sacrifice unto their nets," and burn incense "unto their drag," because by them "their portion is fat and their food plenteous"; but Jehovah is from everlasting, the Holy One, and he will attest his supremacy by utterly destroying the boastful conqueror with his idols.

2. **Faithfulness the Guarantee of Permanency.** The second important truth is expressed in 2. 4, "The righteous shall live by his faithfulness." Faithfulness assures permanency. The thought expressed by the prophet is not identical with that expressed by the

apostle who quotes the words (Gal. 3. 11); nevertheless the former also gives expression to a truth of profound significance. "Faithfulness" is with the prophet an external thing; it signifies integrity, fidelity, steadfastness under all provocations; but this implies, in a real sense, the New Testament conception of faith as an active principle of right conduct. A living faith determines conduct; religion and ethics go hand in hand, and especially in the hour of adversity a belief in Jehovah and unflinching reliance upon him are the strongest preservers of fidelity and integrity. Faith without works is dead; faith expresses itself in life. Habakkuk places chief emphasis upon the expressions of faith, and he does so rightly; but in doing this he also calls attention, by implication at least, to the motive power behind the external manifestations. As an expression of living faith 3. 17–19 is not surpassed in the Old Testament.

IV. OBADIAH

DATE AND PURPOSE OF THE PROPHECY OF OBADIAH

Why Grouped with the Contemporaries of Jeremiah. Nothing is known of the author of this, the shortest book in the Old Testament. Nor is the date of its origin altogether beyond doubt. However, it may be considered in this chapter because (1) there are close resemblances between Obad. 1–9 and Jer. 49. 7–20; and (2), whatever the exact date of composition, it is quite evident that the author looks back to the capture of Jerusalem in 586, with which the prophet Jeremiah is associated.

Historical Background of Obadiah. The date of the prophecy, which is even at the present time a subject

of much discussion, must be determined upon the basis of internal evidence, more especially the historical references in 11–14. These verses presuppose a capture and devastation of Jerusalem as an accomplished fact. If the time of this disaster can be determined the earliest possible date of the utterance is fixed. Now, the Old Testament records four occasions when the capital of the southern kingdom fell into the hands of invaders, but only the last of these, the catastrophe of 586, satisfies the language of the verses indicated; and we may safely assert that the prophecy in its present form comes from a date subsequent to 586 B. C.

Relations of Israel and Edom. The prophecy should be understood as a denunciation of Edom's hostility during the crisis which resulted in the downfall of the kingdom of Judah. True, the historical books do not name Edom as taking an active part in the attack on Jerusalem, but the Old Testament asserts again and again that the Edomites were bitter enemies of the Israelites; and it is evident from references in other exilic and postexilic writings that during the closing days of Judah's national existence the old hostile spirit revived. In Lamentations the poet bids the daughter of Edom rejoice and be glad over the fall of Judah; but he immediately adds a threat of vengeance (4. 21). Ezekiel also announces the doom of Edom (25. 12–14; 35. 1–15); and in Psa. 137 the poet recalls with indignation the malice of the Edomites. This spirit of hostility the prophet condemns in verses 11–14.

Date of the Utterance. The earliest date, then, of the prophecy in its present form is 586. How much

farther down it is necessary to go is somewhat uncertain. There are many scholars who assign the little book to the middle of the fifth century, or even later; on the other hand, there are those equally competent, who believe it unnecessary to go down so far. There is nothing in 15–21 that presupposes the return from exile. In fact, everything—the hopes of restoration, of the destruction of Edom, and of the establishment of the kingdom of God—points to the period before the restoration. On the whole, therefore, the most probable date would seem to be soon after 586, when the memory of Edom's hostility was still fresh in the mind of the author.

Obadiah and Jeremiah. No one can read Obad. 1–9 and Jer. 49. 7–22, without feeling that the marked resemblances between the two passages cannot be mere coincidence. Hence they must be explained in one of three ways: Either Obadiah borrowed from Jeremiah, or Jeremiah borrowed from Obadiah, or both utilized for their own purposes an older prophecy.

Though the question cannot be determined with absolute certainty, on the whole it seems most probable that the two prophets derived the elements common to them from an earlier prophecy, which Obadiah incorporated with few alterations, while Jeremiah treated it with greater freedom. Obadiah may have been familiar not only with the original prophecy, but also with the utterance of Jeremiah depending upon it. On the whole, the earlier prophecy would be the same as Obad. 1–9, which contains no allusions to the destruction of Jerusalem. This older utterance the prophet appropriated after the fall of the holy city and expanded it in verses 10–21, imitating to some

extent the language of the earlier portion. The date and occasion of the earlier prophecy cannot be fixed with certainty.

THE MESSAGE OF OBADIAH

The Destruction of Edom, Verses 1–9. Following the brief title, the prophet announces his theme: He is charged with heavy tidings against Edom. An ambassador is gone forth from Edom to summon the surrounding nations to war against Judah (1); but Jehovah will thwart the scheme. He can no longer endure the ill treatment of his people, therefore he has decreed the downfall of the house of Esau (2). Nothing can save. Though the Edomites think themselves secure in their lofty rock-hewn dwellings, though they may rise up like eagles and build their nests among the stars, Jehovah will bring them down and humble them (3, 4). The destruction will be complete; nothing will escape the invader (5, 6). The nations with which Edom sought alliances will prove treacherous; her own men of wisdom and of war will be cut off (7–9).

The Sins of Edom, Verses 10–16. The judgment will fall because Edom has done violence to Jacob in the day of Jerusalem's calamity (10, 11). The prophet, either in reality or in imagination, sees the Edomites rejoicing in their inhumanities, and bids them to desist from cruel looks and words (12), from overt acts of spoliation (13), and from cutting off the fugitives at the crossways and delivering to the enemies "those of his that remain in the day of distress" (14).

From the description of the crimes the prophet turns once more to the retribution. The Edomites are to be cut off forever; and though the judgment will fall upon all nations, Edom will suffer most (15, 16).

The Exaltation of the Jews, Verses 17–21. The announcement of doom upon the nations is followed by a promise of restoration to Israel. A remnant will escape in Mount Zion (17). The redeemed of the house of Jacob and of the house of Joseph will be used by God to bring destruction upon the house of Esau (18). Edom destroyed, the territory of the purified remnant will be extended in every direction (19, 20). Saviours will arise in Zion, whose sway will extend over the mountain of Esau, and over all will be established the rule of Jehovah (21).

TEACHING OF OBADIAH

The prophet has a twofold purpose: (1) To announce judgment upon Edom; (2) By this announcement to bring comfort and hope to the cruelly wronged people of God. In setting forth these convictions the prophet, directly or indirectly, gives expression to several truths prominent in all the prophetic books. The more important of these are: 1. **The special interest of Jehovah in Israel.** Temporarily he may permit her enemies to triumph, but in the end he must vindicate himself and his people. 2. Obadiah shares with other prophets the hope for **the establishment of a new kingdom of God,** centering in Mount Zion and Jerusalem. 3. **Holiness** will be **the chief characteristic of the new kingdom.** 4. There is **no direct reference to a Messianic king;** "the kingdom shall be Jehovah's." However, the saviours mentioned in verse 21 are representatives of Jehovah like the Messianic king of other prophetic books. 5. **Obadiah does not look for the conversion of the nations** outside of Israel; nothing but disaster is awaiting them (16–18).

CHAPTER IX

EZEKIEL

JUDAH IN EXILE

Causes of Judah's Downfall. The destruction of Jerusalem in 586 marked the close of the national life of the Hebrews. Judah, like the northern kingdom, went to its doom in accordance with the same unchangeable laws that operate in the lives of all nations. Religious, social, and moral corruption will inevitably cause national disintegration. In the case of Judah selfish and inefficient rulers had hastened the process by the pursuit of a weak and vacillating policy that brought upon them the destructive wrath of the Chaldeans.

Difference between Israel and Judah. But there was a difference between the downfall of Judah and that of Israel. The latter was soon swallowed up by the surrounding nations, and never again played an important part in the religious history of the world. This was due to the fact that in Israel religion had not advanced beyond the national stage, so that, when the nation was destroyed, religion, which was bound to the national institutions, could not maintain itself, except, perhaps, in the lives of a few individuals, who were not numerous enough to save it. In Judah it was different. Jeremiah's teaching and activity made it possible for religion to live, though the temple, the holy city, and the state should go to ruin. He denationalized religion, he individualized and spiritualized

it, so that many came to see that they might continue as true worshipers of Jehovah, no matter what became of the external religious institutions. Undoubtedly, when the final crisis came, many failed to endure the test and went the way of their brothers in the north; nevertheless, a considerable number of Jews overcame their environment, and their faith in Jehovah, the one and only God, triumphed. However, these faithful ones were not found among those who were left behind in Judah, nor among the fugitives who fled to Egypt, but in the groups of Jewish captives that had been carried to Babylonia by Nebuchadnezzar in 597 and 586. Upon these exiles depended the future of the Jewish race and of the Jewish religion.

The Two Exiles. The first exile occurred in 597, when the leaders and the more substantial men in the southern kingdom were carried away. Nebuchadnezzar contented himself with removing the "heads and the hands" of the nation, in the hope that by this act he would make the population left behind incapable of organized resistance. From this time on to the second deportation in 586 the life of the Jews ran in two parallel streams, one in Judah, the other in Babylonia. But the Babylonian king was disappointed. The enfeebled remnant left behind quickly regained its military efficiency, and in a few years a new struggle ensued, which resulted in a second exile, when a much larger portion of the population was carried away.

External Condition of the Exiles. The condition of the exiles in Babylonia was fairly comfortable. They appear to have been free in all respects except choice of residence. Sections of land were assigned to them, where they had the opportunity to acquire property

and even to amass wealth. Many heeded the advice of Jeremiah (29. 5–7), identified themselves with the interests of their masters, and lived settled lives in peaceful industry and family happiness. Permission was granted to them to form settlements under their own elders, who in all probability organized the new communities after the pattern of Palestinian towns. Religious as well as civil liberty was granted, so that in its general aspects the life in Babylonia may have differed but little from that in the small towns of Judah before the fall of the state.

Religious and Moral Conditions of the Exiles. Religious and moral conditions may have continued for some time as they were before the exile. True, both Jeremiah and Ezekiel consider the exiles better than the Jews left behind, and they see in the former the nucleus of the Messianic kingdom; nevertheless, the conditions which confronted Jeremiah in Jerusalem were essentially the same as those which troubled Ezekiel among the exiles. Many of the captives conformed to Babylonian customs and forgot Jerusalem. Idolatry and superstition were widespread, and some seemed to think that idolatry was perfectly compatible with a nominal allegiance to Jehovah (Ezek. 14. 1ff.; 20. 1ff.). During the years preceding the fall of Jerusalem false prophets appeared among the exiles prophesying smooth things and promising a speedy restoration (Jer. 29. 8ff.), and they persuaded many to oppose the earnest and severe message of Ezekiel (Ezek. 2. 3ff.; 3. 4ff.). The sense of personal responsibility, which Jeremiah had sought to create in Judah, was but slightly felt by the great majority in exile. Many were the complaints that they had to bear the sins of their

ancestors (18. 2, 25; 33. 10, 17, 20; 37. 11). It is seen, then, that the great mass of people had failed to learn the lessons which the judgment of exile was to teach them.

The Faithful among the Exiles. Nevertheless, there were in exile many men of piety and zeal, who retained their faith in Jehovah; yea, whose faith was purified and intensified by the experiences of the exile. They were ready to follow the teaching of any great soul who might attempt to lead them to higher and diviner things. Among these choice spirits Ezekiel found a congenial sphere of activity. In every crisis of Hebrew history prophecy had been a mighty power for good. The prophets had foretold the captivity, and it had now come. But they had also foretold the restoration of a remnant; and it was this prediction that now sustained the faithful exiles. Ezekiel's glowing words kept alive the hope, and at the same time tended to bring the whole people into a more vital relation with their God, such as Jeremiah had emphasized, and as individuals here and there had enjoyed even before the exile. Self-examination and contrition for the past led to a return to Jehovah, and the exiles came to see more and more that, after all, true religion did not depend upon the existence of the state, or the sacred city, or the temple itself, but upon the relation of the individual to his God. For the history of Judaism and of religion in general the Babylonian exile was of the greatest significance.

THE PERSONAL LIFE OF EZEKIEL

Ezekiel's Preparation for the Prophetic Office. Ezekiel, the son of Buzi, was a priest (1. 3). As such he belonged to the aristocracy in Jerusalem and was

carried into exile in 597. Little or nothing is known of his earlier life. His familiarity with the priestly ritual may suggest that he was old enough when he left Jerusalem to have officiated for some time in the national sanctuary. The authority with which he speaks and the deference shown him by his fellow exiles also suggest that he was no longer in his first youth when he assumed the prophetic office. If so, he may have been acquainted with Jeremiah; and the numerous points of contact between the two prophets would seem to indicate that he was a disciple of the older man, or at least that the latter's teaching had made a profound impression upon him. "In his character and work these two currents of influence—the priestly and prophetical—constantly appear, and their harmonious blending is one of the great sources of his power." He undoubtedly knew of the reform era under Josiah and he lived through the reactionary reign of Jehoiakim. When he entered the prophetic office conditions among his fellow exiles must have been bad; at any rate, he had a very low opinion of his countrymen in Jerusalem and in Babylonia. He calls them "rebellious, . . . impudent, . . . stiff-hearted, . . . briers, . . . thorns, . . . scorpions" (chapters 2 and 3).

Ezekiel in Babylonia. In Babylonia he was settled in a community of exiles at Tel-Abib—perhaps, more accurately, Tel-Abub—by the river Chebar. There he lived with his wife in his own house (3. 24), where in later years the elders came to listen to him (8. 1). The prophetic call came to him in the fifth year of his exile, that is, in 593 or 592 (1. 2ff.). His own account of this spiritual crisis reveals the two motives which influenced him throughout his entire ministry:

on the one hand, the vision of the majesty, glory, and purity of Jehovah; on the other hand, the realization of the startling contrast between the character of his countrymen and the divine ideal for them. Henceforth his sole ambition was to persuade the house of Israel to realize this divine ideal.

Activity to the Fall of Jerusalem. Until 586, when Jerusalem fell, Ezekiel devoted himself almost exclusively to combating the false hopes of a speedy restoration entertained by many both in Jerusalem and in exile. It is only natural that during this period denunciations and threats should predominate. His message was received no more kindly than was that of Jeremiah (3. 25). Toward the close of this period the prophet's wife died (24. 16–18). This bereavement came near the beginning of the last siege of Jerusalem and marked the close of Ezekiel's earlier ministry. During this period prophecies are dated in the fifth, sixth, seventh, and ninth years of Jehoiachin's captivity. While the siege was in progress the prophet seems to have refrained from speaking (24. 27), but when the news of the city's fall reached him he spoke again (33. 22). During the period of silence he wrote prophecies concerning Egypt (29. 1; 30. 20; 31. 1).

Later Activity. When his predictions of the fall of Jerusalem were fulfilled a great change came over the popular attitude; henceforth Ezekiel enjoyed the veneration of all the Jews in Babylon, and his influence extended to his fellow believers everywhere. His message also assumed a different aspect, for he now dwelt more and more upon the coming restoration. According to the dates given in the book, this period of activity was short, and was succeeded by

many years of silence. No date is given between the twelfth and the twenty-fifth year (32. 17; 40. 1). During this interval the prophet's conviction of a restoration grew, and at the close he composed a complete, detailed scheme for the establishment of a religious community upon Palestinian soil, in which the will of God would be supreme law (chapters 40–48).

Peculiarity of Ezekiel's Work. In spirit and earnestness Ezekiel was a prophet as truly as were any of the men whose teaching and activity we have studied thus far, but the changes in the national life gave a new aspect to his prophetic activity. Even during the years preceding the fall of Jerusalem he could not address himself to the nation in the way in which his predecessors had done, for he and his listeners were removed from the old center of the national and religious life. Inevitably the individual assumed an importance undreamed of before. Jeremiah had prepared the way for this, and Ezekiel followed in his footsteps. Hitherto public discourse had been the principal means of prophetic instruction; Ezekiel continued to use this to some extent, but it was impossible in exile to gather crowds such as might be collected in Jerusalem, to listen to the addresses of a prophet. Ezekiel had to deal with individuals and small groups of individuals, and he readily adapted himself to the changed conditions. He became preëminently a pastor, a shepherd, devoting himself to the care of those who came under his immediate charge. He frequently designates himself a watchman, appointed by God (3. 17). He clearly defines his pastoral responsibilities: If he faithfully warns those who are committed to his care he is innocent in the sight of God, but if he fails in his duty

their blood will be required of him (33. 1–9). His fellow exiles seem to have fully recognized his position as pastor, for they freely came to consult him, either in person or through their elders (14. 1; 33. 30).

Variety of Ezekiel's Methods of Work. The variety of methods which Ezekiel employed to impress his message upon his countrymen is quite remarkable. As has been indicated, sometimes he used the method of public discourse. In 6. 11, "Smite with thy hand, and stamp with thy foot," we may have a reference to gestures as means of making the message more impressive. Frequently deputations of Jews came to his house and sat before him (14. 1), which implies that the interviews and discussions continued for some time. At other times he may have put his message in the form of pastoral letters; indeed, as has been suggested, all of Ezekiel's prophecies "bear evidence of long meditation and careful elaboration. . . . He dwells upon his subject, and expands and develops his thought, in contrast to the terse, sharp utterances of the older prophets. Not content with an outline, he fills in the details of the picture, sometimes to the detriment of its distinctness."

Parables, Allegories, Visions, Symbolical Acts. Ezekiel shows great fondness for parables and allegories as means of instruction, some of which are developed to considerable length. The book also abounds in visions and symbolical actions. There seems insufficient reason for questioning the reality of all the visions recorded. The prophet evidently was of a highly imaginative temperament, and so may have been subject to trances or visions. Certainly, when the prophet put the visions in writing he may have

elaborated them, and in some cases it is not altogether improbable that he used the form of the vision simply as a literary device for the purpose of making his message more vivid. Some of the symbolical acts recorded were undoubtedly performed by the prophet; on the other hand, there are some references to symbolical actions that are more naturally explained on the principle suggested by A. B. Davidson: "They were imagined merely. They passed through the prophet's mind. He lived in this ideal sphere; he went through the actions in his fantasy, and they appeared to him to carry the same effects as if they had been performed."

THE MESSAGE OF EZEKIEL

Arrangement of the Book of Ezekiel. The Book of Ezekiel was probably compiled by the prophet himself toward the close of his ministry. It consists of three sections, dealing with three different subjects: 1. Chapters 1–24, the sin of Judah and its punishment; 2. Chapters 25–32, oracles against foreign nations; 3. Chapters 33–48, Israel's future restoration: (1) chapters 33–39, prophecies of restoration; (2) chapters 40–48, the constitution of the restored Israel.

The Inaugural Vision of Ezekiel, Chapter 1. The first section (1. 1—3. 21) records the prophet's call and initiation into his ministry. In the fifth year of his exile (1. 1—3) he had a vision of Jehovah in his majesty and splendor. He saw a storm cloud advancing from the north (4); out of it came the likeness of four living creatures, each with four faces and wings, all moving in the same direction (5–14). The four figures inclosed a four-sided chariot with four wheels (15, 16). The movements of the wheels corresponded to those

of the creatures, because the same spirit was in both (17–21). Over the heads of the creatures a firmament was spread out (22–25), and above the firmament was the likeness of a throne, upon which was "a likeness as the appearance of a man," surrounded by brightness, which represented the glory of Jehovah (26–28).

Ezekiel's Appointment as a Prophet, Chapters 2, 3. While the vision passed before him Ezekiel heard the voice of Jehovah appointing him a prophet to the children of Israel. At the same time he is warned that his message will meet opposition (2. 1–7). Then follows a symbolical representation of the communication of Jehovah's words to the prophet. The words are inscribed on a roll, which he eats at the divine command (2. 8—3. 3). Jehovah repeats the commission: He is to be a prophet to the house of Israel, not to "a people of a strange speech"; but his own people will refuse to heed his message (4–9). His special mission is to those of the house of Israel who are in exile (10–15). Among the exiles at Tel-abib there comes to him the consciousness of the real character of his work; he is appointed "a watchman unto the house of Israel," and it behooves him to discharge faithfully the duties of his office (16–21).

Four Symbolical Actions and their Significance, 3. 22—5. 17. Chapters 3. 22—7. 27 contain a series of utterances and symbolical actions announcing the impending fall of Judah and Jerusalem. Chapter 3. 22–27 is introductory. The vision of Jehovah comes to him again, and he is commanded to withdraw temporarily from his public ministry. In 4. 1—5. 4 four symbolical actions are recorded, representing the

siege of Jerusalem (4. 1–3), the people bearing their iniquity (4–8), the privations undergone by the people during the siege and subsequent exile in an unclean land (9–17), and the slaughter and dispersion of the inhabitants of Jerusalem (5. 1–4). Then follows an explanation of the four symbolical acts: Jerusalem, favored more than other nations, has surpassed them in wickedness (5, 6); therefore judgment, which will come in the forms of pestilence, famine, sword, and exile, is inevitable (7–17).

The Utter Destruction of Judah, Chapters 6, 7. Not the city only but the whole land—called "the mountains of Israel"—is guilty, therefore the whole land must suffer. The high places, the altars, and the sun-images, all connected with idolatrous worship, will be destroyed with the worshipers who gather there (6. 1–7); yet a faithful remnant will escape (8–10). The threat of utter devastation is repeated. Chapter 7 is a new announcement of the downfall of Judah. The end is come upon the four corners of the land (1–4), and upon its inhabitants (5–9), for the abominations which they have done. All alike will be humiliated and perish (10–13). Terror will fall upon all, and little resistance will be offered (14–18); their silver and gold will avail nothing in the day of the siege and will become the prey of the enemy (19–22). The worst of the nations will be sent to punish their crimes; prophets, priests, and rulers will fail in the hour of distress; "I will do unto them after their way, and according to their deserts will I judge them; and they shall know that I am Jehovah" (23–27).

Idolatry Practiced in the Temple Precincts, Chapter 8. In the sixth year of his exile, in the sixth

month, on the fifth day, Ezekiel, in the presence of the elders who had come to consult him, fell into a trance, in which he was transported to Jerusalem, where a series of events passed before his eyes (8. 1–4). On awaking he related all the things he had seen (11. 25). The visions which came to him at that time are recorded in chapters 8–11. Chapter 8 deals with various forms of idolatry practiced in the precincts of the temple: the image of jealousy (5, 6), the secret abominations of the elders (7–13), the lamentation of the women for Tammuz (14, 15), and the worship of the sun (16–18).

Slaughter of the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, Chapter 9. Chapter 9 portrays the slaughter of the inhabitants of the city. Jehovah summons the messengers who are to execute the judgment threatened in 8. 18. Six men respond and stand by the side of the brazen altar (1, 2). A mark is placed upon the foreheads of the faithful, and all not so marked are slain (3–7). When the prophet sees the awful slaughter he intercedes and prays that the slaughter cease (8), but he is told that the people's sin is too great and must be punished (9–11).

Jehovah's Departure from the Sanctuary, Chapter 10. The prophet again beholds the cherubim and the wheels, which he saw in his inaugural vision (10. 1–5, 9–17, 20–22). At the divine command burning coals are taken from the fire between the cherubim and scattered over the city (2, 6, 7). Jehovah leaves his throne, and stands over the threshold of the temple to watch the execution of his orders (4–17); this done, he resumes his seat upon his throne, and takes his departure from the sanctuary (18, 19).

Jehovah's Departure from the Doomed Jerusalem, Chapter 11. He next sees twenty-five leading men of the city counseling rebellion, in the belief that the city walls would offer ample protection (11. 1–4). At the divine command he informs them that their confidence is not well founded; the city will be taken and they will be dragged out and slain (5–12). While the prophet is yet speaking one of the leaders drops dead; whereupon, in terror, the prophet falls upon his face and prays for the preservation of at least a remnant (13). He is assured that Israel will continue to live in the exiles, who are to be restored, and then will serve Jehovah with a new heart and a new spirit (14–20). The wicked Jerusalem and its inhabitants must perish (21). Finally the prophet sees the glory of Jehovah depart from the city and rest upon Mount Olives, in the east (22–25).

Symbolical Acts Portraying the Downfall of Jerusalem, Chapter 12. The certainty of the nation's downfall and its cause, namely, the people's sinfulness, is set forth in a series of discourses and symbolical acts recorded in chapters 12–19. The house of Israel is blind (12. 1, 2), therefore a more vivid form of teaching must be adopted (3). The prophet's preparation to go into exile is to symbolize the approaching exile of Zedekiah and of the inhabitants of Jerusalem (3–16). Another symbolical act is meant to bring before the people the anguish and privations of the impending exile (17–20). Delay in the fulfillment of a prophecy does not imply necessarily nonfulfillment (21–25); Jehovah will carry out the present threat in the near future (26–28).

The Lying Prophets and the Doom of the Corrupt

City, Chapters 13, 14. In the succeeding verses (13. 1—14. 11) Ezekiel takes up the subject of lying prophets. The lying prophets are without visions, hence they follow their own spirit (13. 1–3). They have deceived and are still trying to deceive the people (4–7), therefore destruction will overtake them (8, 9). Their message of peace has led the people astray, and people and prophets will perish alike (10–16). The false prophetesses, whose activities are especially pernicious, will be severely punished (17–23). Idolaters need expect no divinely given message from a prophet (14. 1–8). If a prophet is deceived and prophesies to please the people, he and they will perish together (9–11). The presence of righteous persons is no guarantee of safety for the unrighteous; only the righteous will escape (12–20). Contrary to this rule a few godless persons will escape in the destruction of Jerusalem, to convince the exiles by their unholy conduct that the judgment that has fallen upon the city is well merited (21–23).

Allegories Teaching Jerusalem's Ripeness for Judgment, Chapters 15, 16. In a series of allegories the prophet points out that Jerusalem is ripe for judgment. Like a useless vine it is about to be cast into the fire (15. 1–8). By the allegory of the foundling child who became the faithless wife of her benefactor the prophet shows the inevitableness of Jerusalem's destruction. In the beginning Jerusalem—representing the whole nation—was an outcast infant (16. 1–5), but Jehovah adopted her, and under his care she grew to womanhood (6, 7), when he made her his wife (8–14). But soon she broke her marriage vow, and on many occasions proved faithless to her husband

(15–34). Therefore the punishment of an adulteress will be meted out to her (35–43). She is worse than Sodom and Samaria (44–52). Hence her punishment will be severer and will last longer than that of these cities. Only after they are restored (53–58) can she be restored to the divine favor (59–63).

The Disloyalty of Zedekiah and its Consequences, Chapter 17. The disloyalty of Zedekiah to the king of Babylon and its consequences is the subject of chapter 17. The prophet is ordered to put forth a riddle or parable (1, 2): A great eagle came to Lebanon and took the top of the cedar, the topmost of the young twigs, and carried it to a city of merchants (3, 4). He also took the seed of the land, planted it and cared for it till it became a luxuriant vine (5, 6). There was also another eagle, and in time the vine turned its branches toward him (7, 8); for which treachery the vine will be plucked up and wither (9, 10). The explanation of the parable is supplied in verses 11–21. The first eagle represents the king of Babylon, who came to Jerusalem and carried into exile King Jehoiachin (11, 12); then he placed upon the throne Zedekiah, who became his vassal (13, 14); in the course of time Zedekiah rebelled and sought help from the other eagle, the king of Egypt (15); for this treachery king and people must suffer (16–21). The prophecy closes with a promise of a brighter day, when Jehovah will plant another shoot of the cedar, which will grow into a large tree (22–24)—a promise of the advent of the ideal ruler of David's dynasty.

Individual Responsibility before God, Chapter 18. In chapter 18 Ezekiel discusses the moral freedom and responsibility of the individual man before God,

a doctrine taught by Jeremiah, but treated here at greater length. The prophet's contemporaries complained that they were suffering for the sins of their fathers (1, 2). Not so, replies Ezekiel, every one is rewarded according to his own doings: the righteous man lives, the unrighteous man dies; the fate of each is altogether independent of the merits or demerits of his fathers (3–20). Similarly, the fate of a man is not determined by his own previous life: the wicked man who repents will live, while the righteous man who turns from his righteousness must die (21–29); therefore let every one turn to Jehovah and live, for he has no pleasure in the death of him that dies (30–32).

Dirge over the Fall of Judah, Chapter 19. Chapter 19 contains a dirge over the fall of Judah and the two princes, Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin, under the two figures of a lioness and her whelps (1–9), and a vine and its branches (10–14).

Jehovah must Punish Judah's Rebellion, Chapter 20. Chapters 20–24 contain further oracles concerning the doom of Judah and Jerusalem. As on another occasion (14. 1), the elders came to consult Jehovah through Ezekiel (20. 1). Jehovah replies that he will not be inquired of them (2–4). His attitude toward them is determined by their attitude toward him. In Egypt (4–9), in the wilderness (10–26), and in the promised land (27–32) they rebelled against him and he punished them; in the same manner he must punish their present rebellion and idolatry (33–39). When the punishment has accomplished its disciplinary purpose they will be received back into the divine favor (40–44).

Chapter 20. 45–49 (Hebrew, 21. 1–5) contains a

prophecy against the forests of the south—a fire will devour them. The verses are a symbolic representation of the overthrow of Judah.

Imminence of Jerusalem's Destruction, Chapter 21. The destruction of Jerusalem is announced under the figure of a sharpened sword, which Jehovah wields against the city (21. 1–17). Then follows a symbolic narrative, setting forth the imminent ruin of Jerusalem. The king of Babylon is represented as casting lots to find out whether he should attack Jerusalem or Rabbah, the capital of Ammon. The lot falls upon the former on account of her sins (18–27). Ammon too will fall before the invader (28–32).

Total Depravity of Jerusalem, Chapter 22. The prophet presents a new indictment against Jerusalem in chapter 22. The city is totally depraved, her principal crimes being bloodshed and idolatry (1–5), but there are many other sins to arouse the resentment of Jehovah (6–12). There is no escape from the terrors of judgment (13–16). With the burning heat of the smelter's furnace the fire of the divine wrath will be poured upon them (17–22). Princes, prophets, priests, and people are equally corrupt and must suffer together (23–31).

Allegorical Representation of the History of Judah and Israel, Chapter 23. Chapter 23 is a description of the history of Israel and Judah under the figure of the career of two sisters, Oholah and Oholibah, whom Jehovah married, but who were faithless to him and ran after many lovers (1–5). Oholah, that is, Israel, committed whoredom with Assyria and Egypt (6–8), for which Jehovah punished her by delivering her into the hands of Assyria (9, 10).

Oholibah, that is, Jerusalem, committed whoredom with Assyria (11–13), with the Chaldeans (14–18), and with Egypt (19–21); therefore she must share her sister's fate (22–35). The chapter closes with a new description of the immoralities of Oholah and Oholibah, followed by a threat of judgment (36–49).

Last Oracle against Jerusalem, Chapter 24. Chapter 24 contains Ezekiel's last oracle against Jerusalem, delivered in the ninth year of the prophet's exile, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, that is, near the beginning of the final siege of Jerusalem, in January, 587 B. C. The siege and capture are described in the form of a parable. A caldron is to be set on the fire, filled with water; pieces of flesh are to be cast into it, and fuel is to be piled under it, that it may boil furiously. The caldron represents Jerusalem, the pieces of flesh the inhabitants, the fire and boiling the siege with its terrors (1–5). The judgment comes as a punishment for sin, which cleaves like rust to the caldron (6–8). The threat is renewed in verses 9–14. In verses 15–27 an incident in Ezekiel's family life is made the vehicle of a message to the exiles. The prophet's wife dies suddenly; but he is forbidden to give open expression to his grief, as a sign that the Jews will be dumb with anguish when they hear of the fall of Jerusalem.

Prophecies Concerning Foreign Nations, Chapters 25–32. Chapters 25–32 contain prophecies concerning foreign nations. "The insertion of these oracles in this place is an instance of the constructive skill which planned the order of the book. They fill up the interval of silence which separates the two periods of Ezekiel's ministry. . . . The section, moreover, em-

bodies a distinct idea in the prophet's eschatological scheme. The motive of the judgments announced is to prepare the way for the restoration of Israel, by removing the evil influences which had sprung from the people's contact with its heathen neighbors in the past (28. 24–26; 29. 16)." Seven nations are mentioned: Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Tyre, Sidon, and Egypt. Most of the prophecies are brief; only those against Egypt and Tyre are elaborated.

Prophecies against Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Chapter 25. Chapter 25 contains prophecies against four peoples: Ammon will be overrun because it rejoiced in the calamity which befell the people and city of Jehovah (1–7), and a similar fate will befall Moab (8–11). Jehovah will also avenge upon Edom (12–14) and Philistia (15–17) the wrongs done to his people.

Prophecies Concerning Tyre and Sidon, Chapters 26–28. Chapters 26. 1—28. 19 center around Tyre. Chapter 26 is a prophecy of Tyre's destruction. Tyre has mocked Jerusalem in her calamity, therefore she too will be broken down (1–6); the instrument of the divine wrath will be Nebuchadnezzar and his armies (7–14); the news of her fall will cause consternation and lamentation everywhere (15–18). The city will surely be plunged into eternal darkness, her place will be with the dead, and never again will she be seen among the living (19–21).

Chapter 27 is a dirge over the downfall of Tyre, which is represented as a ship laden with manifold treasures, but steered by its pilots into dangerous waters, where it suffers shipwreck. The prophet first describes the ship, the timbers, furnishings, and

manning (1–11). Many nations hasten to place their wares and merchandise on the ship (12–25); but out on the high sea it is suddenly wrecked and its treasures lost in the deep (26, 27). Consternation will spread everywhere, and men will bitterly wail over the dreadful calamity (28–35).

Chapter 28. 1–19 is directed against the king of Tyre. He may now boast in his riches, power, and wisdom, but he will be helpless in the day when the nations advance against him (1–10). This is followed by a dirge over his downfall (11–19).

Sidon, another powerful city of Phœnicia, is threatened with an invasion and siege (20–23). Afterward Israel, restored and delivered from neighbors who are pricking briers and thorns, will dwell in safety (24–26).

Six Oracles against Egypt, Chapters 29–32. Chapters 29–32 consist of a group of six oracles against Egypt, delivered, with one exception (29. 17–21), near the fall of Jerusalem. Pharaoh, the proud river dragon, and his people will be destroyed or scattered, because they have defied Jehovah and, after seducing Judah with promises of support, have failed to stand by her (29. 1–12). At the end of forty years Egypt will be restored as "the basest of the kingdoms" (13–16). Verses 17–21 form an appendix to the preceding, added sixteen years later: Nebuchadnezzar will be compensated by the conquest of Egypt for his unsuccessful attack upon Tyre (17–20). After the conquest of Egypt Israel's prosperity will revive (21).

Chapter 30 consists of two prophecies announcing the speedy overthrow of Egypt. The first declares that the whole land will be overrun, the cities de-

stroyed, the king overthrown, and the people carried into exile (1–19). The second refers to a recent defeat of Pharaoh (20, 21) and predicts additional disasters (22–26).

Chapter 31 pictures the fall of the Pharaoh under the figure of the cutting down of a great cedar. Chapter 32. 1–16 is a dirge over Egypt's disgrace. The Pharaoh, representing Egypt, is likened to a crocodile dragged from its accustomed haunts and cast upon the dry land; its giant body covers the mountains and the valleys, and the blood streaming from it stains the earth; heaven and earth stand aghast at the sight. The rest of the chapter (17–32) is a dirge over the Pharaoh and his army, who descend into Sheol to join Assyria and other oppressors of Israel.

Prophecies of the Restoration, Chapters 33–48. With chapter 33 begin the prophecies of the restoration, which continue to the end of the book. The report of the fall of Jerusalem filled the exiles with despair. They thought the end had surely come. Ezekiel steps forward and points out that a new era is about to dawn and a new Israel is about to arise. The prophecies of restoration deal with this new era and the new Israel. The first group is contained in chapters 33–39, which describe the manner in which Jehovah will restore his people to the promised land.

Responsibilities of the Prophetic Office, Chapter 33. The responsibilities of the prophetic office are again impressed upon Ezekiel (33. 1–9). Then he reaffirms his doctrine of individual responsibility (compare chapter 18)—the penitent sinner will be saved, while the backsliding saint must perish—to show that no one among the exiles need despair of

the divine mercy, if only he will truly turn to Jehovah (10–20). The news of the fall of the holy city reaches the prophet (21, 22). He denounces the remnant left behind in Judah for its immoralities (23–29), and his fellow exiles, because they do not act according to his teaching (30–33).

Advent of the Messianic King, Chapter 34. Chapter 34 announces the advent of the Messianic king. The former rulers of Israel have been evil shepherds who neglected the sheep (1–4); as a result the people suffered affliction and violence (5, 6). Therefore the evil shepherds will be removed (7–10), and Jehovah himself will shepherd the flock (11–22). As his representative he will give them a prince of the Davidic dynasty, under whose care the flock will live in permanent peace and prosperity (23–31).

Contrast between the Destiny of Edom and that of Israel, Chapters 35, 36. The prophecy in chapter 35 is directed against Edom. The Edomites were hostile to the Israelites throughout almost their entire history. At the time of Jerusalem's fall they expressed malicious joy over the distress of the Jews, and after the latter's deportation to Babylonia some of them took possession of part of the territory of Judah. For these expressions of hostility Edom will become a perpetual desolation. On the other hand, the mountains of Israel, now devastated and objects of reproach and derision, will again enjoy the blessing of Jehovah and swarm with inhabitants (36. 1–15); one of the best gifts will be spiritual regeneration (25–27). Jehovah will restore his favor not for Israel's sake, but for his own sake, that the nations may know that he is God (16–38).

Restoration of Judah and Israel, and the Messianic Ruler, Chapter 37. Chapter 37. 1–14 portrays the revival of the people from the death of exile under the figure of the resurrection of an army of dry bones. Judah, however, will not be restored alone: Israel will have a share in the blessings of the future (15–24). Over both the ideal King David will rule (24, 25), while Jehovah himself will set up his sanctuary in their midst (26–28).

Jehovah's Final Triumph over the Nations of the Earth, Chapters 38, 39. Jehovah's final triumph over the nations of the earth is portrayed in 38. 1—39. 20. Gog, of the land of Magog, musters his armies against Israel (38. 1–13). The attack is in accord with Jehovah's will, in order that he may sanctify himself (14–16). Though ordered by Jehovah, the attack of Gog will be the occasion of a terrible judgment upon him and his hosts, in which they will be completely annihilated (38. 17—39. 20). Then all the nations will know that Jehovah is God, and he will no more hide his face from his people (21–29).

The Extent and Splendor of the New Sanctuary of Jehovah, Chapters 40–43. In chapters 33–39 Ezekiel expresses the conviction that the exiles will be restored to their former home; in chapters 40–48 he sets forth the constitution upon the basis of which the life of the restored community is to be organized.

There is first a description of the new sanctuary where Jehovah will dwell in visible splendor (chapters 40–43). In the beginning of the twenty-fifth year of his exile, that is, in 572, Ezekiel is carried in a vision to Jerusalem, where he sees a man with a measuring line, who serves as his interpreter (40. 1–4). He gives

to the prophet a description of the outer court with its gates and chambers (5–27); from there they pass to the inner court with its gates and chambers (28–47). Then he describes the temple itself, the dimensions of its several parts, the porch, the tabernacle, the side chambers, the main building, etc., and its decorations (40. 48—41. 26). Afterward the two return to the outer court, where the man points out and describes the chambers located toward the north and toward the south, intended for the use of the priests (42. 1–14); and then he proceeds to measure the whole group of temple buildings (15–20). The new sanctuary of Jehovah having been completed, he can now resume his seat there. Nineteen years before Ezekiel saw the glory of Jehovah depart from the temple; now he reënters his house (43. 1–12). In the remaining verses are given the measurements of the altar of burnt offerings (13–17) and instructions concerning the sacrifices and ceremonies to be performed on the occasion of the dedication of the temple (18–27).

Regulations concerning the Administration of the New Community, Chapters 44–46. The next section (chapters 44–46) contains various regulations concerning the ministers of the temple, the duties and revenues of the priests, the Levites, and the prince; also concerning the ritual to be observed. The purpose of all these regulations was to keep unimpaired the sanctity of the temple, and thus to retain the presence and favor of Jehovah. The eastern gate is to remain shut, because through it Jehovah entered the temple (44. 1–3). All foreigners are to be excluded from the temple service (4–9). The Levites who had been priests at the high places are to fill the inferior offices

(10–14), and the priesthood is to be restricted to the sons of Zadok (15, 16). Various rules are laid down for the proper conduct of the priests, concerning their garments (17–20), the drinking of wine (21), marriage (22), their duties as teachers (23) and judges (24), contact with dead persons (25–27), and their revenues (28–31). A certain portion of the land is to be set apart as "an oblation unto Jehovah" (45. 1–3), to be used for the maintenance of priests, Levites, and the prince, and for the city (4–8). Fixed dues are to be paid to the prince, out of which he must provide the materials for the temple service (13–17). Correct measures and weights must be used in determining these dues (9–12). Detailed instruction is given concerning various kinds of sacrifices and offerings, the offerings at the feasts (18–25), at the Sabbaths and the new moons (46. 1–11), voluntary offerings of the prince (12), and the daily burnt offering (13–15). The section closes with two appendixes, the first (16–18) dealing with the rights of the prince to bestow gifts, the second (19–24) with the places set apart in the inner and outer courts for the cooking of offerings eaten by the priests and the people respectively.

Disposition of the Tribes in the Holy Land, Chapters 47, 48. The closing chapters (47, 48) describe the boundaries of the holy land and a new disposition of the tribes in it. A stream issuing from beneath the temple will fertilize the desert parts of the land and sweeten the bitter waters of the Dead Sea (47. 1–12). The boundaries of the holy land are clearly defined (13–20). The land is to be divided by lot among the tribes of Israel and certain strangers (21–23). The territory set apart for Jehovah is to

be near the center; north of it are seven tribes: Dan, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Reuben, and Judah (48. 1–7). The portion of Jehovah is divided among the priests, the Levites, the city, and the prince (8–22). The five tribes of Benjamin, Simeon, Issachar, Zebulon, and Gad are assigned to the territory south of Jehovah's portion (23–29). There will be twelve gates leading out of the city (30–34), whose name from that day shall be, "Jehovah is there" (35).

ACTIVITY AND TEACHING OF EZEKIEL

Significance of Ezekiel. The Book of Ezekiel is not as interesting and attractive as are some of the other prophetic books, nor is the person of Ezekiel as grand and majestic as are some of the other prophets of Israel. Nevertheless, Ezekiel did a work that was of the greatest importance to his day and generation, and whose influence continued to be felt throughout the succeeding centuries of Jewish religious history; and his book is by no means without lessons of permanent value. In the words of Kraetzschmar, "If the remnant of Israel was not lost among the heathen after the destructive catastrophe of 587–586, but found the way in which alone its future lay, this is really due to the service rendered by Ezekiel. In a wonderful manner he suited his activity to the changed conditions." The more important aspects of his work are:

1. **Denunciation of Judah's Sins and Announcement of Doom.** From the time of his call to the destruction of Jerusalem he devoted his energies almost exclusively to combating the false hopes of deliverance which were entertained by the Jews left

behind in Judah and by many in exile. These hopes were encouraged by certain false prophets, with whom both Jeremiah and Ezekiel came in conflict. As is quite natural, during this period his message was largely one of denunciation (chapters 1–24).

2. **Repentance the Condition of Restoration.** The people must be made to feel that they have offended a holy God, and that they must bear the consequences of their sins. Before the prophet could hold out any hope of a return of the divine favor, he must lead the people to heartfelt repentance, to self-examination, contrition for past idolatries and sins, and an earnest desire henceforth to live a life acceptable in the sight of a holy God. Ezekiel, like Hosea, was firmly convinced that heartfelt repentance was a fundamental condition of the restoration of the divine favor. "Return ye, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, wherein ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord Jehovah: wherefore turn yourselves, and live" (18. 30–32).

3. **Promises of Restoration.** However, Ezekiel was not exclusively a messenger of doom. Denunciation might lead the people to see their own wretchedness and fill them with remorse for wrongdoing, but that in itself would not produce a change of life and character. On the contrary, it might lead to apathy and despair. That many actually lost heart is made clear by passages like these: "Our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we pine away in them; how then

can we live?" (33. 10,) and, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are clean cut off" (37. 11). These cries show that the consciences of the speakers had been touched, and that they were ready for a message of hope and encouragement. Other prophets had foretold a restoration, and Ezekiel sought to sustain the despairing exiles with the promise of the ultimate restoration of the divine favor to all who would truly seek Jehovah. Even in the first division of the book, which contains the denunciations of the years preceding the fall of Jerusalem, a few bright promises may be found (11. 16ff.; 16. 60ff.; 17. 22–24; 20. 40ff.; etc.); however, it is especially in the utterances originating in the years subsequent to the catastrophe of 586 that Ezekiel gives expression to his sublimest hopes.

The following elements enter into the prophet's teaching concerning the future glory:

(1) **Judgments upon the Nations.** The restoration of the exiles is to be preceded by judgments upon the nations outside of Israel (chapters 25–32, 38, 39). The redeemed and restored remnant is intended to be the nucleus of the new kingdom of God upon earth, which will be a kingdom of peace and righteousness. In the past the surrounding nations had harassed the people of Jehovah; the only way to prevent their doing so in the future was to destroy them, or at least to fill them with such awe that they would lack courage to make another attack. Besides, in the past contact with foreign nations had led to idolatry and sin; to assure permanent purity in the future, this temptation to apostasy must be removed. These two ends are to be accomplished by the judgments upon

the nations announced by Ezekiel. "These judgments," says Davidson, "will awaken the nations to the knowledge who the God of Israel is—they shall know that he is Jehovah; and they will insure that in the future his people shall not be troubled or led astray." Skinner calls attention to the other purpose of the judgments in these words: "The motive of the judgments announced is to prepare the way for the restoration of Israel, by removing the evil influences which had sprung from the people's contact with its heathen neighbors in the past (28. 24–26; 29. 16)."

(2) **Endowment of the Land with Extraordinary Fertility.** The land of Israel, now in the possession of foreigners (36. 2), will be prepared for the reception of the exiles, on the one hand, by the expulsion of the present masters (36. 3–7); on the other, by its endowment with extraordinary fertility: "Ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people Israel; for they are at hand to come. For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown" (36. 8, 9, 29, 30, 34, 35).

(3) **A Spiritual Regeneration.** The exiles will be prepared for the return to the promised land by moral and spiritual regeneration. "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep mine ordinances, and do them" (36. 25–27).

(4) **Restoration of the Exiles.** The preparation

completed, the exiles will be restored to the promised land, there to live forever in prosperity and in the fear of Jehovah (37. 1–14; compare 36. 8ff.). The restoration of the exiles is likened to a resurrection from the dead: "Behold, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, O my people; and I will bring you into the land of Israel" (37. 12). Then the mountains of Israel will swarm with people, the cities will be inhabited, and the waste places will be rebuilt (36. 10). The northern kingdom will have a share in the blessings of the restoration, and north and south will be reunited (37. 15ff.).

(5) **The Messianic Ruler.** In the past the people of Jehovah had suffered much from faithless and incompetent shepherds, and the present distress was due very largely to their neglectfulness (34. 16). In the new era all this will be changed, for Jehovah himself will be the shepherd of his flock and supply all its needs (34. 11–22). As his earthly representative he will appoint over the united Israel and Judah a descendant of David: "I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I, Jehovah, will be their God, and my servant David prince among them; I, Jehovah, have spoken it" (34. 23, 24; 37. 22ff.).

(6) **Return of Jehovah to the Regenerated People.** The regenerated and restored nation will live in close fellowship with Jehovah forever. The sins of Jerusalem compelled him to leave the temple and the city, and give them up to destruction (chapters 10, 11); but in the age of restoration the sanctuary will be rebuilt, Jehovah will reënter it and establish an eternal

covenant of peace with his people. "Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (37. 26, 27; compare 43. 1–12).

4. **The Organization of the Restored Community.** Ezekiel was not content with predicting the restoration and the changes accompanying it; he put his convictions and ideals into concrete form in chapters 40–48. The prophet must have seen that the efforts of the earlier prophets had proved more or less of a failure; they had been unable to avert the destruction of the nation, and their teaching had not brought about the moral and spiritual transformation upon which they insisted. Ezekiel saw the cause of the failure in the inability of the common people to grasp the abstract teaching of the prophets and apply it to the daily life. He sought to remove the difficulty and secure purity and righteousness in the life of the individual and of the whole community by mapping out a scheme for the establishment of a theocracy in the promised land. "The unique significance of that remarkable creation lies in the fact that under the form of a Messianic prophecy it presents the scheme of a politico-religious constitution, in which the fundamental idea of holiness is applied to the regulation of every part of the national life. It is a picture of the kingdom of God in its final and perfect state as this prophet was led to conceive it." The underlying idea was the holiness of Jehovah and the conviction that only as this holiness was reflected

in the life of the people was real and permanent fellowship between Jehovah and Israel possible.

Fundamental Ideas Underlying Ezekiel's Teaching. It remains now to point out some of the fundamental ideas underlying Ezekiel's teaching. We have already seen that many of the truths proclaimed by him are identical with those taught by the earlier prophets, but there are some truths, or aspects of truths, that are peculiar to him, or receive special emphasis from him.

(1) *The Glory of Jehovah.* Of primary interest and importance is Ezekiel's conception of the nature and character of Jehovah. Fundamental in his thought of Jehovah is what he calls the glory of Jehovah. The idea expressed in this phrase is similar to that suggested by the song of the seraphim in Isaiah's vision, "The whole earth is full of his glory"; that is, evidences of the glorious manifestations of Jehovah in nature and history may be seen on every hand. The glory of Jehovah is described especially in the visions recorded in chapters 1, 10, 43. In all these passages the phrase suggests the glorious majesty and power, the universal supremacy of the God of Israel, which he desires to manifest continually in his dealings with men. The divine glory was so overpowering that at the sight of it the prophet fell upon his face (1. 28; 3. 23), and this he considers the proper attitude in the presence of Jehovah.

(2) *The Name of Jehovah.* Similar in meaning is the phrase "the name of Jehovah." The glory of Jehovah denotes the glorious manifestations of Jehovah in nature and especially in history; the name of Jehovah is that side of his nature that can be revealed

to man, or the sum of his attributes as he has revealed them. All the dealings of Jehovah with Israel, says Ezekiel, are for his name's sake; that is, for the purpose of revealing his true nature and character. The Israelites rebelled against Jehovah in Egypt; nevertheless, for his name's sake he was merciful and brought them out of the land of bondage (20. 8, 9; compare verses 14, 22). Had he given them up to destruction, his name would have been profaned among the nations; for to them any disaster that befell his people would have been an indication of his weakness and inability to protect them, and this misconception might have caused them to mock him. To prevent this he delivered Israel, though it deserved otherwise. In the same manner, the restoration in the future is not due to any merit on the part of the exiles, but again to the desire of Jehovah to make himself known in his true nature and character to Israel and to the nations (36. 22, 23).

(3) *The Holiness of Jehovah.* In several passages Ezekiel states that by a certain act Jehovah will "sanctify himself" or "show himself holy." With Ezekiel, as with Isaiah, the holiness of Jehovah denotes not so much a particular attribute as his whole essential Godhead, though the prophet never loses sight of the moral aspect of the divine holiness. "Holy as applied to Jehovah is an expression that in some way describes him as God, either generally or on any particular side of his nature, the manifestation or thought of which impresses men with the sense of his Godhead." It is seen, then, that the statement that Jehovah will show himself holy or sanctify himself means simply that he will show himself to be the

only true God. The actions of his people and his dealings with them in the past may have left some doubts on this point in the minds of the nations, but his future treatment of Israel and of the nations will open the latter's eyes and convince them that he alone is God (20. 41; 28. 22, 25; 36. 23; 38. 16, 23).

Moral Freedom and Individual Responsibility. Ezekiel emphasizes and expands the doctrine of the freedom and responsibility of the individual soul before God, which was first taught by Jeremiah. There were, as in the days of Jeremiah, those who complained that they were suffering for the sins of their fathers (18. 2, 19). This is not true, says Ezekiel: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" (18. 20). The prophet makes it equally clear that a person does not lie under the ban of his own previous life (18. 21–32). His moral freedom raises him above both these influences. This truth, that religion was an individual affair, that it depended upon the relation of the individual to his God, was of the greatest importance in the days of Ezekiel, when many felt that the destruction of the holy city and the temple involved the loss of true religion.

Israel's Sinfulness at the Beginning of its History. Ezekiel differs from the earlier prophets in his view of Israel's history. Hosea, Isaiah, and Jeremiah taught that Israel was pure in the beginning; only after the exodus from Egypt did the nation apostatize from Jehovah. Ezekiel, on the other hand, traces

the rebellion of Israel back to Egypt (20. 8; 23. 3). Even then the people deserved the divine wrath, and Jehovah brought them out of bondage only in order that his name might not be profaned among the nations (20. 9).

Ezekiel's Estimate of the Externals of Religion. Perhaps in nothing is the contrast between Ezekiel and the earlier prophets more clearly marked than in his attitude toward the ritual. All the preëxilic prophets insist that the ritual is not an essential element of true religion (Amos 5. 21–25; Hos. 6. 6; Isa. 1. 11–15; Mic. 6. 6–8; Jer. 3. 16, 17). Ezekiel, on the other hand, devotes considerable space to a detailed program, describing the ecclesiastical organization of the community after the return from exile; and in these provisions much stress is laid upon many things that earlier prophets considered of little or no consequence. This emphasis of the externals of religion has led to the charge that Ezekiel "transformed the ideals of the prophets into laws and dogmas, and destroyed spiritually free and moral religion." This sweeping charge is not warranted. In the first place, Ezekiel had every reason for believing that his age required the expression of religious ideals in external, concrete forms. The great mass of people needed the temple, the sacrificial system, and other institutions as means of communion with God; and it is exceedingly doubtful if the religion of Jehovah could have survived without them. That later generations exaggerated the importance of externals until finally the spirit was altogether lost sight of was not the fault of Ezekiel. In the second place, the ritual does by no means exhaust the religious interests of

the prophet. Again and again he insists that a pure and righteous life is an essential part of true religion (chapters 3, 18, 33). Besides, it must be borne in mind that the provisions in chapters 40–48 are intended for a regenerated people; they are meant to aid a regenerated community to give proper expression to its devotion to Jehovah. "In interpreting the mind of the man who sketched this priestly legislation it is unfair to ignore those profound and noble utterances touching the necessity of the new heart (18. 31; 36. 26) and the new spirit (11. 19), utterances which have the ring of some of the greatest words of Jeremiah."

CHAPTER X

ISAIAH, Chapters Forty to Sixty-six

CONDITIONS IN BABYLONIA FROM THE CLOSE OF EZEKIEL'S ACTIVITY TO THE CAPTURE OF BABYLON BY CYRUS

Successors of Nebuchadnezzar. The great Nebuchadnezzar continued to reign until 562. During his lifetime the splendor of Babylon endured, but after his death the empire which he had built up quickly went to pieces. His son Amel-Marduk, the biblical Evil-merodach (2 Kings 25. 27), was slain at the end of two years at the instigation of the priesthood, and his brother-in-law, Nergal-shar-uṣur, was made king. After a reign of about three years he was succeeded by his son Labashi-Marduk, who, however, was almost immediately assassinated. Nabonidus, a native Babylonian, and hence, perhaps, the leader of a reaction against the Chaldeans, who had furnished the kings since the days of Nabopolassar, became the last king of Babylon about 555. He stood under the influence of the priesthood, and spent much time in rebuilding and beautifying temples. These enterprises, though commendable in themselves, did nothing for the defense of the empire and caused him to lose the favor of the military party, and in the end even the priests turned against him.

Attitude of the Scythians. The Scythians, with singular fidelity, kept their treaty with Babylon as long as the dynasty of Nebuchadnezzar was on the throne, but when it was overthrown they felt them-

selves absolved from their obligations and began to extend their borders beyond the old treaty limits, established after the fall of Nineveh. They entered Mesopotamia, where they occupied the city of Haran, and Babylonia would have fallen before them had there not appeared a new conqueror upon the scene.

Conquests of Cyrus. Cyrus, king of Anshan, was his name. Anshan was a small district in Elam, but when Cyrus once entered upon his wars of conquest nothing seemed able to stop him. The powerful Scythians, the Medes, Persia, and Crœsus, the famed king of Lydia, were subdued in rapid succession. Finally, in 538, the main body of the army of Cyrus, under the leadership of his general Ugbaru, advanced against Babylon. The city surrendered without a struggle, and Nabonidus was taken prisoner. In October of the same year Cyrus himself entered the city, where he was welcomed as a deliverer. The proud empire of Nebuchadnezzar was at an end.

DATE OF ISAIAH 40–66

Historical Background of Isa. 40–66. It is universally admitted that Isa. 40ff. reflect the conditions of the Babylonian exile: (1) Jerusalem and the temple are in ruins (44. 26, 28). (2) The time of punishment is almost over (40. 2) and the time of redemption is at hand (40. 9ff.; 46. 13). (3) Babylon is named as the oppressor, and it is stated that her dominion will soon cease (43. 14; 46. 1ff.). (4) Cyrus is named as the executioner of judgment upon Babylon and the deliverer of the exiles (44. 28; 45. 1), and he is represented as having already achieved some of his victories (41. 2, 25; 45. 1–3). (5) Appeal is made to ancient prophecies predicting the events taking

place in the author's days (41. 26; 42. 9; 44. 8; 45. 21; etc.). These prophecies, which have to do chiefly with the restoration from exile, were delivered by the preëxilic prophets.

Date of the Chapters. But while it is universally admitted that "these chapters are unquestionably written from the standpoint of the Babylonian exile," there is a difference of opinion as to whether the author actually lived at that time and wrote out of his own historical environment, or whether Isaiah, the son of Amoz, to whom the prophecies in the earlier part of the book are assigned, was transported by the spirit to the period of the exile, about one hundred and fifty years from his own day, and addressed the utterances to the exiles whom he saw before him not in reality, but only in the spirit. The majority of modern scholars hold that the author lived among the exiles, and so, that he was not the eighth century Isaiah. "It was the office of the prophet of Israel to address himself to the needs of his own age, to announce to his contemporaries the judgments or consolations which arose out of the circumstances of their own time, to interpret for them their own history. To base a promise upon a condition of things not yet existent, and without any point of contact with the circumstances or situation of those to whom it is addressed, is alien to the genius of prophecy."

To be Interpreted from the Standpoint of the Exile. The determination of the authorship of the chapters is of interest and importance, but after all is of little consequence for our study, since all are agreed that the utterances reflect the exile and that, therefore,

they must be interpreted from the standpoint of the exile. The prophecy opens at some date between 549 and 538. The conquest of Babylon is still in the future; on the other hand, Cyrus is represented as already upon the scene of action, about to strike a blow against Babylon. It seems, therefore, that the standpoint of the author, whoever he may be, is that of about 545 B. C. This is certainly true of the earlier chapters of the section. There are those, however, who believe that the section contains some utterances that come from a much later period.

CONTENTS OF ISAIAH 40–66

The Restoration of the Exiles, Chapters 40–48. It has become customary to divide the chapters into three nearly equal sections, chapters 40–48, 49–55, 56–66. The theme of the first division (chapters 40–48) is the deliverance and restoration of the exiles through the instrumentality of Cyrus. To give emphasis to his promises the prophet calls attention again and again to the mighty power of Jehovah, which enables him to carry out his purpose in the face of all obstacles.

The Restoration of the Exiles is at Hand, 40. 1–11. Chapter 40. 1–11, a passage of great beauty, may be considered the prologue, in which the prophet sets forth the theme of the entire section. The time of Israel's punishment is almost over, and the time of redemption is at hand; therefore a message of comfort and hope is in order (1, 2). Already the prophet hears a voice summoning unseen agencies to prepare a way for Jehovah in the desert (3–5). Another voice commands the prophet to proclaim the ground of his conviction that deliverance is at hand:

"The word of our God shall stand forever" (6–8). Prompted by his conviction, the prophet calls upon messengers to announce to Judah and Jerusalem that Jehovah is about to bring back the redeemed people (9–11).

The Incomparable Greatness of Jehovah, 40. 12–31. The announcement may be startling, but the exiles must remember who makes the promise, Jehovah, the creator and ruler of heaven and earth. In the rest of chapter 40 the prophet enforces his message of comfort by picturing the incomparable greatness of Jehovah; no finite mind can comprehend him, no human conception can express him, therefore idolatry is absurd (12–26). Whoever relies upon Jehovah, whose manifestations may be observed in nature and history, shall not be disappointed (27–31).

Cyrus, the Instrument of Jehovah, to Free Israel, Chapter 41. The signs of the times point to an approaching deliverance. Jehovah propounds to an assembly of the nations the question, Who has raised up the great conqueror from the east? (41. 1–4a.) This conqueror is Cyrus, who has already entered upon his career of triumph. It is no one but Jehovah, who has chosen Cyrus to carry out his purpose (4b–7). The nations may well tremble; but in the midst of the convulsions Israel, the chosen servant, has nothing to fear. Jehovah is doing all this that his servant may be delivered and fulfill his divinely appointed mission (8–20). Verse 21 is the continuation of verse 7. Jehovah, not the heathen idols, has raised up Cyrus, as is shown by the fact that he alone foresaw and predicted the event (21–29).

Jehovah's Continued Care for Israel His Servant,

42. 1—43. 7. Israel is the chosen servant of Jehovah who is to teach true religion to the world (1–4), and Jehovah promises that he will aid him in the carrying out of this mission (5–9). Assured of Jehovah's speedy triumph the prophet breaks into a song of thanksgiving, in which he calls upon the whole earth to rejoice (10–12), because Jehovah is about to redeem his people (13–17). Though Israel has a lofty mission, in the past it has failed to respond to the divine leadings; therefore the fierceness of the divine wrath has been poured upon it (18–25); but the time of punishment is past, and Jehovah is about to restore his people (43. 1–7).

Israel's Glorious Restoration an Act of Mercy, 43. 8—44. 5. The words of Jehovah are worthy of attention, for the fulfillment, in the present history of Israel, of earlier prophetic utterances proves him to be the only true God (43. 8–13). Israel is about to be delivered from Babylon, and the new deliverance will be more wonderful than the ancient deliverance from Egypt (14–21). This is not due to any merit on Israel's part, for it has grievously sinned against Jehovah (22–24), but is an act of free grace (25–28). In the new era of splendor other nations will be anxious to join themselves to his people (44. 1–5).

Jehovah, who alone is God, will Surely Fulfill his Promises, 44. 6—45. 25. In 44. 6–8 the argument from the fulfillment of prophecy is appealed to once more, to prove that Jehovah alone is God. Then the prophet exposes with much sarcasm the folly of idolatry (9–20). He exhorts Israel to remember that Jehovah is its redeemer (21–23); it is he who has commissioned Cyrus to deliver the exiles and to rebuild

Jerusalem and the temple (44. 24—45. 8). Those exiles who murmur because Jehovah has chosen a foreigner to be his anointed are reminded that Jehovah is supreme and can choose whom he will (9–13). The ultimate object of the call of Cyrus is to bring, through the redemption of the exiles, a knowledge of the true God to other nations (14–17). The promises of Jehovah will surely be fulfilled (18–25).

The Impending Doom of Babylon, Chapters 46, 47. The impotence of the Babylonian gods (46. 1, 2) is contrasted with the mighty power of Jehovah (3–7). Let Israel remember what he has done in the past and trust him for the future (8–12). Chapter 47 contains a taunt-song over the doomed city. Jehovah will depose Babylon from her position of luxury and ease (1–4). She will be displaced as the mistress of the kingdoms, because she has shown no mercy to Israel (5–7). Her self-confidence will avail nothing, for suddenly destruction will come upon her (8–11). Her sorceries and other resources will utterly fail in the day of calamity (12–15).

Jehovah's Manifestations in Israel's Past History a Guarantee of Speedy Restoration, Chapter 48. Chapter 48 is addressed to the exiles. If they would look over their past—especially, if they would study past predictions and their fulfillment—they would see the divine hand in the events of their history (1–11). The imminent fall of Babylon, which will result in the release of the exiles, is the supreme evidence of Jehovah's interest in his people (12–16). Jehovah bewails the past stubbornness of Israel (17–19), but the time of deliverance is at hand, therefore let the exiles flee from the land of bondage (20–22).

The Mission of the Servant of Jehovah and the Glorification of Zion, Chapters 49–55. The second section (chapters 49–55) deals with the mission of the servant of Jehovah and the glorification of Zion. Several lines of thought, prominent in chapters 40–48, here disappear, probably because the prophet feels that they have been developed at sufficient length and that he has established his case beyond controversy. Among the omitted features are the references to Cyrus, the predictions of the fall of Babylon, the appeal to the fulfillment of prophecy, the condemnation of idolatry, and the arguments to prove the sole deity of Jehovah. The prophet is concerned more with the moral and spiritual preparation of the exiles for the restoration and with the future exaltation of the redeemed remnant. The figure of the servant of Jehovah occupies a prominent place.

The Servant of Jehovah and Jehovah's Readiness to Aid Him, 49. 1—50. 3. In 49. 1 the servant of Jehovah is introduced. He describes the mission intrusted to him by Jehovah and the discouraging experiences of the past (1–4). His task is great, for both Jews and Gentiles are to be saved through him (5–13). The complaint of the despondent exiles, that Jehovah has forsaken them, is unwarranted; he is still interested in them and will surely restore them (14–26). Their present distress is due not to his lack of interest but to their sins; however, he will soon manifest his power in their behalf (50. 1–3).

The Servant of Jehovah—his present Distress and Imminent Deliverance, 50. 4—52. 12. In 50. 4–9 the servant speaks again, describing the manner in which he does the work assigned to him and the

difficulties he must overcome; nevertheless, he is confident that Jehovah will help him. The prophet exhorts his contemporaries to imitate the faith of the servant (10), and warns the ungodly that their evil schemes will result in their own undoing (11).

Jehovah has called Israel to be his servant, hence he cannot forsake him. The glorious salvation is near (51. 1–8); the deliverances of the past are a guarantee that Jehovah will keep his promise now (9–11); let Israel but trust in Jehovah and not be afraid of man (12–16). The present distress of Jerusalem is great; she has drunk deep of the cup of Jehovah's wrath (17–20), but he is about to take it from her and place it in the hands of her oppressors (21–23). Therefore let Zion lay aside her soiled raiment and put on festal garments (52. 1, 2), for Jehovah will restore his people, in order to save his name from blasphemy (3–6). Already the speaker beholds upon the mountains of Judah the messengers who bear the glad tidings of Israel's deliverance, and he hears the watchmen announcing the good news (7–10); therefore once more he summons the exiles to depart from the land of their captivity (11, 12).

The Servant of Jehovah—his Exaltation after a Period of Deepest Humiliation, 52. 13—53. 12. The subject of 52. 13—53. 12 is again the servant of Jehovah, whose exaltation after a period of deepest humiliation is portrayed. The servant, whose extreme sufferings have caused astonishment, is to be highly exalted, so that nations tremble and kings are put to shame (52. 13–15). Earlier statements concerning the servant were not believed; he was despised and rejected (53. 1–3). At last the

speakers' eyes were opened and they saw that he was suffering in their behalf (4–6). Patiently he suffered, and was finally taken away and buried among evildoers (7–9). Jehovah has purposed that he should be exalted through suffering; surrounded by his seed he will occupy a seat among the mighty (10–12).

Zion's Future Splendor, Chapter 54. Zion, now barren and desolate, will have many children, and her borders will be extended to accommodate all (1–3). The shame of her youth and the reproach of her widowhood are to be blotted out (4–6). Her rejection was only temporary, but her restoration will be final and as permanent as the covenant with Noah (7–10). Jerusalem is to be rebuilt in magnificence and splendor, and her inhabitants will live in peace forever (11–17).

The Promised Blessings Intended for All, Chapter 55. These promises are intended for all; therefore let all partake of the blessings so freely offered (55. 1–5). The summons is urgent, for Jehovah is about to manifest himself (6, 7). This statement is true, though his thoughts and purposes are beyond the understanding of men (8, 9). Already the word of redemption has gone forth, and it will not return without accomplishing its purpose (10, 11); the deliverance from exile is at hand, when all will be joy and felicity (12, 13).

The Future Blessedness of the True Israel and the Doom of the Apostates, Chapters 56–66. The third section (chapters 56–66), which contrasts the future blessedness of the true Israel with the doom of the apostates, is less homogeneous than the other two sections. "In passing from chapter 55 to chapter 56," says Skinner, "the reader is at once sensible of

a change of manner and circumstance, which becomes still more manifest as he proceeds."

All who Keep the Law of Jehovah to Enjoy Fellowship with Jehovah, Chapters 56, 57. Chapter 56 begins with a blessing upon all who keep the law of Jehovah, especially upon those who keep the Sabbath holy (1, 2). Even proselytes and eunuchs who observe the Sabbath are permitted to participate in the temple worship, for Jehovah's house shall be called "a house of prayer for all peoples" (3–8). There follows a section of an entirely different character (56. 9—57. 10), in which the prophet turns from the glories of the future to denounce the sins of his contemporaries. It opens with a denunciation of the faithless shepherds who neglected their flock Israel and allowed it to perish (56. 9—57. 2). The succeeding verses are directed against idolatries of various forms (3–10). Such conduct means certain doom (11–13a); repentance offers the only hope of escape, for Jehovah alone can revive and restore them (13b–21).

The Fast Acceptable to Jehovah, Chapter 58. The people complain that Jehovah has failed to reward their painstaking observance of the fast days (58. 1–3a); to which the prophet replies that fasting without a righteous life is of no value in the sight of Jehovah (3b–5). The fast in which he delights consists in deeds of philanthropy, unselfishness, generosity, loving-kindness. If they practice these, observe the Sabbath, and do the will of Jehovah in other respects, he will show them his favor and exalt them forever (6–14).

Sinfulness the Cause of the Present Distress, Chapter 59. It is not the impotence of Jehovah, but

the sinfulness of the people, that has caused their salvation to be withheld (59. 1–8). The prophet, putting himself in the place of the people, pictures their hopeless condition and vain endeavor to find relief (9–11), and makes a confession of the national wickedness that has caused the present distress (12–15a). Though the present is so dark, the prophet is convinced that some day Jehovah will interfere, to execute vengeance upon his adversaries and to redeem the penitent Zion (15b–21).

Future Glory of the City of Jerusalem, Chapters 60–62. When this redemption is wrought the city of Jerusalem will be glorious. Darkness may cover the earth, but Jerusalem will be bright and the nations of the earth will come to her light (60. 1–3). Her exiled children will be restored, and the wealth of the nations will come unto her (4–9). Then she will become the mistress of the nations; they will build her walls, kings will serve her, and treasures untold will be brought for the beautifying of Jehovah's sanctuary (10–14). Her inhabitants will live forever in prosperity and peace, in righteousness and light (15–22). The promise of the future glory of Zion is continued in chapter 61. The prophet is conscious of a sublime mission, and his labor will not be in vain (1–3). The waste places will be rebuilt (4), Israel will become the priestly mediator between the nations and Jehovah (5, 6), and receive double compensation for past sufferings (7–9). The prophet, as the mouthpiece of the redeemed community, rejoices in the transformation wrought (10, 11). He also declares that he will continue to labor on Zion's behalf until her redemption is complete (62. 1–5). He

beholds watchmen upon the wall who remind Jehovah of his promises to Zion (6, 7), which he will surely keep (8, 9). The time of deliverance is at hand, and it is time to prepare the way for the return of the exiles (10–12).

Doom of Edom; Prayer for a Renewal of the Divine Favor, Chapters 63, 64. While Zion is exalted, her enemies, especially Edom, are trodden down (63. 1–6). There follows, in 63. 7—64. 12, a prayer of the people for the renewal of Jehovah's former loving-kindness. It opens with a commemoration of Jehovah's goodness to the faithful nation in its youth (7–9). True, Israel has rebelled, but it still remembers the divine mercy (10–14). O that Jehovah would return to his people (15–19). This petition is continued in chapter 64. O that he would repeat the wonderful manifestations of the past (1–3), for his withdrawal has increased the nation's sin and distress (4–7). The prayer closes with an appeal to the divine fatherhood and an earnest plea that Jehovah will restore his favor to his children (8–12).

The Faithful and the Rebellious, Chapter 65. In chapter 65, which seems to be intended for a reply to the prayer, a distinction is made between Jehovah's faithful servants and the rebellious. Jehovah has always been accessible to his people, but they have rebelled against him, and now he will destroy the evildoers (1–7). A faithful remnant will be preserved and enjoy the divine blessing (8–10); on the other hand, those that forsake Jehovah will be cut off (11, 12). In verse 13 the rebellious are addressed: While Jehovah's true servants will enjoy the presence and favor of their God, the rebellious will be completely anni-

hilated (13–16). The various blessings in store for the former are enumerated in verses 17–25.

Jehovah to Reward the Faithful, to Destroy the Wicked, Chapter 66. In view of the anticipated restoration of the temple the prophet reminds the people, in chapter 66, that no earthly dwelling place is adequate to contain the majesty of Jehovah (1, 2), nor can an insincere worship win his favor (3, 4). The faithless will be destroyed, while the faithful in Zion will be redeemed (5–9). Peace and joy will reign in the new Jerusalem, when Jehovah will comfort those who now mourn (10–14). Verse 15 returns to the judgment upon the evildoers (15–17). The judgment is followed by a glorious restoration, when the faithful will be exalted forever, while the punishment of the impenitent rebels will endure forever (18–24).

THE TEACHING OF ISAIAH 40–66

The Book of Consolation. "In many respects," says Cornill, "this Second or Deutero-Isaiah must be accounted the most brilliant jewel of prophetic literature. In him are gathered together as in a focus all the great and noble meditations of the prophecy which preceded him, and he reflects them with the most gorgeous refraction, and with the most beauteous play of light and color." The essential characteristic of the message of the chapters is expressed in the opening words, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem; and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she hath received of Jehovah's hand double for all her sins." The all-pervading note is consolation; hence the chapters have been styled the "Book of Consola-

tion." The theme of the earlier prophets was primarily judgment, but they saw a ray of light beyond the darkness and gloom. These chapters assume that the judgment has fallen, the exile is a reality, the poor Jews are oppressed and pining away in their grief; but the author beholds the end of the captivity and oppression, and he seeks to revive the drooping spirits with this message of hope and salvation.

The Mission of the Redeemed Israel. To the prophet Israel's release from exile means something more than a restoration to the promised land. It is only one step in the carrying out of God's redemptive purpose for the whole human race. The deliverance of Israel will be a revelation of the sole deity of Jehovah, and will open the eyes of the surrounding nations, though it will not succeed in leading all of them to a complete knowledge of the true God. Therefore, when Israel is restored to its former home and to intimate fellowship with Jehovah, it will take up the work that still remains to be done and become the minister of salvation to the rest of mankind, as Jehovah had ordained in the beginning.

The Sole Deity of Jehovah. The prophet never wearies of emphasizing the sole deity of Jehovah. This was not a new truth, for from the time of Amos on it had been taught in one way or another. But there was need of stating this truth in a more forceful and comprehensive way. In the thought of the ancients the fortunes of a deity were closely bound up with the fortunes of his worshipers. The prosperity and success of the worshipers were an indication of the power and supremacy of their God; on the other hand, their misfortunes and defeat were an evidence of

his impotence. Israel had trusted in Jehovah, Babylonia in Bel, Marduk, Nebo, and its other numerous deities; Israel had been blotted out as a nation, and the survivors had been carried into exile; Babylonia had triumphed and become the mistress of the world. The great mass of common people would draw but one inference from this, namely, that the gods of Babylonia were stronger than the God of Israel; and those who did not go so far would, at least, look with suspicion upon their God. A serious situation indeed! Was it possible to overcome this skepticism and unbelief? On the answer to this question depended, humanly speaking, the fate of true religion. Our prophet had at least a glimpse of the far-reaching issues involved and, especially in the earlier portion of the book, he insists again and again on the sole deity of Jehovah, while he points out with equal force and persistency the nothingness of the idols. The most vivid portrayal of the folly of idolatry is found in 44. 8–20; but compare also 40. 18–20; 41. 29; 43. 9ff.; etc. "The teaching of the prophet on this theme amounts to a sustained polemic, the more impassioned, perhaps, because in Babylon idolatry was practiced on such an imposing scale, and must have produced on the exiled Jews so overwhelming an impression" (46. 1, 2). A strong argument for the sole deity of Jehovah is drawn from the fulfillment of prophecies delivered in former days (41. 21–26; 42. 8, 9; 43. 9–13; 44. 8; 45. 20, 21; 46. 9).

The Divine Omnipotence and Supremacy. Closely connected with the sole deity of Jehovah is his supremacy or omnipotence; indeed, the latter is simply one aspect of the former, for if Jehovah alone is God,

it naturally follows that he is all-powerful and supreme. Evidences of the divine power and supremacy may be seen on every hand: (1) In creation and the present course of nature: "Lift up your eyes on high, and see who hath created these, that bringeth out their host by number; he calleth them all by name; by the greatness of his might, and for that he is strong in power, not one is lacking" (40. 26; compare verses 12, 28). (2) In the affairs of men and nations: "It is he that sitteth above the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants therof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; that bringeth princes to nothing; that maketh the judges of the earth as vanity" (40. 22, 23). (3) In the past history of Israel: "I have declared, and I have saved, and I have showed; and there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and I am God" (43. 12; compare 51. 2, 9ff.). (4) In the events now taking place, especially in the conquests of Cyrus: "Who hath raised up one from the east, whom he calleth in righteousness to his foot? . . . I have raised up one from the north, and he is come" (41. 2, 25; compare 44. 28; 45. 1–3).

It is to emphasize more strongly the omnipotence and supremacy of Jehovah that the prophet institutes the comparisons between him and the impotent idols to which reference has been made. He also contrasts the omnipotence of Jehovah with the weakness of man: "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field" (40. 6).

The omnipotence and supremacy of Jehovah are discussed by the prophet for a specific purpose, namely,

to comfort the exiles who are now in distress and despair. The omnipotent God, who has chosen Israel as his servant, to carry out his universal redemptive purpose, will not forsake him in the present crisis. Already he has raised up Cyrus to perform his pleasure, that is, to bring deliverance to the exiles; already he is on his way to Babylon; the city will surely fall, and then Jehovah will gather the exiles and carry them safely through the desert to their former home (40. 3–5, 9–11; 43. 14).

The Righteousness of Jehovah. In a general way it may be said that the author of these chapters conceives the righteousness of Jehovah to be that attitude or kind of manifestation which expresses the divine fidelity to the covenant relation between Israel and Jehovah. This righteousness finds expression in various ways: (1) In speech: "I, Jehovah, speak righteousness, I declare things that are right" (45. 19). In exhorting the people to seek him Jehovah spoke righteousness, for it was his purpose that he should be found; which was proper and right in view of the covenant established in the beginning. (2) In the deliverance of Israel. Whatever Jehovah has done, is doing, or will do for Israel, is in accord with the purpose embodied in the first covenant, that Israel should be the chosen people and carry out the redemptive purpose of God. He called Israel, his servant, in righteousness (42. 6), he will uphold him by the right hand of his righteousness (41. 10); he has raised up Cyrus in righteousness (45. 13), and he will bring near his righteousness in the deliverance and restoration of Israel to Zion (46. 13; 56. 1). (3) In the salvation of mankind. The covenant with Israel implied more than

that it should be a peculiar people; it implied that through Israel the knowledge of the true God should come to all mankind. Hence the determination that all men should submit to Jehovah is a manifestation of his righteousness: "By myself have I sworn, the word is gone forth from my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear" (45. 23; compare 51. 5, 6, 8).

The Holy One of Israel. The first part of the Book of Isaiah has much to say about the holiness of Jehovah. Isaiah is very fond of the title "the Holy One of Israel," to describe the relation of Jehovah to his people; indeed, he may have coined the term. Chapters 40ff. show the same fondness for the title. It is "the Holy One of Israel" who will redeem and exalt the exiles: "Thy redeemer is the Holy One of Israel" (41. 14; compare 43. 14; 47. 4; 48. 17; 49. 7; 54. 5; 55. 5; 60. 9, 14). The holiness of Jehovah is the motive of his righteousness. Because he is holy, that is, because he is truly God and endowed with the fullness of perfection, he must be true to the covenant relation established in the beginning. Whatever Israel may do or fail to do, his nature and character demand that he do his share to make Israel in truth his own peculiar people, and through it bring the knowledge of himself to the whole human race.

The Name and the Glor of Jehovah. Two ideas very prominent in the Book of Ezekiel are also emphasized by the author of Isa. 40ff., namely, that Jehovah will redeem Israel "for his name's sake" and for the purpose of manifesting "his glory." With the former phrase the prophet, like Ezekiel, means that the redemptive work of Jehovah is not due to any

merit on the part of the redeemed, but rather to the desire of Jehovah to prevent the nations from getting a false conception of him, and to make known to them his true nature and character (43. 25; 48. 9–11). In a similar manner the statement that Jehovah has done or will do a certain thing for his glory (40. 5; 43. 7; 59. 19; 60. 1, 2; 66. 18, 19) means that by the act he seeks to reveal his glorious majesty and power, his universal supremacy, that all men may learn to know him as the only true God.

The Divine Purpose the Redemption of the Whole World. The prophet's view of Israel is determined by his conviction that the ultimate purpose of Jehovah is the redemption of the whole world: "My house shall be called a house of prayer *for all peoples*" (56. 7). This belief, that the ultimate goal of all history was that all men and nations should turn to God and become his children, gave to the prophet a new basis for his contemplation of the history and destiny of Israel, or, at least, caused him to expand and emphasize a view found in less developed form in earlier prophetic utterances. "Israel alone knows and possesses the true God. Only through Israel can the other nations learn to know him, and thus Israel becomes the servant and messenger of God, the laborer and herald of God to man. Israel is to mankind what the prophet is to Israel. God is the God of the whole earth, and Israel his prophet for the whole earth."

Israel the Servant of Jehovah to Carry Out his Redemptive Purpose. The prophet looks upon Israel as the servant of Jehovah charged with a mission to mankind. Perhaps the most unique element in the teaching of this prophet, especially in chapters

40–53, is the constant reference to the servant of Jehovah. That some of the passages refer to Israel as the servant cannot be doubted. For example, 41. 8ff., "But thou, Israel, my servant," or 44. 1, "Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant, and Israel, whom I have chosen," and several more. It is to be noted, however, that in these and similar passages Israel is always spoken of as a nation with a mission.

Delitzsch's Interpretation of the Servant Passages. The significance of these passages is quite clear, but there are many who hold that as the prophet proceeds and his argument progresses the meaning of the term "servant of Jehovah" changes. In the words of Delitzsch, "The idea of the servant assumed, as it were, the form of a pyramid. The base was the people of Israel as a whole, the central section was Israel according to the Spirit, and the apex is the person of the mediator of salvation springing out of Israel." That in some cases the term cannot be used of the historical nation Israel is shown, for example, in 49. 1ff., where the servant describes the mission he has received from Jehovah. The servant is still called Israel: "Thou art my servant; Israel, in whom I will be glorified" (3); but it is distinctly stated that the servant has a mission to the nation Israel, and, after that mission is fulfilled, to the other nations (5, 6). Here a distinction is made between the historical nation Israel, or, the Israel after the flesh, and the ideal Israel, which had its historical existence in the faithful worshipers of Jehovah within the nation, or, the Israel after the Spirit. The Israel after the flesh is apostate (42. 18), and the first task of the Israel after the Spirit is to restore the apostate nation.

This done, the whole redeemed nation may enter upon its redemptive work for the nations of the earth.

The Servant in Isa. 52. 13—53. 12. It is less certain that anywhere in the section the servant of Jehovah is spoken of as an individual. The two passages which are thought by some to favor an individual interpretation are 50. 4–9 and 52. 13—53. 12. If these passages stood by themselves they might be thus interpreted, but if studied in connection with the other "servant" passages and in the light of their context it seems more natural to refer these also to the righteous nucleus within the nation. The personification may seem very bold, but having once represented Israel, that is, a collective idea, as a servant, that is, as an individual, the author would naturally continue to speak of the personified collective as an individual. In 50. 4–9 the personified righteous nucleus is represented as expressing its consciousness of a divinely given mission. In 52. 13–15 Jehovah announces the exaltation of the servant after his difficult task is accomplished. In 53. 1 the penitent Israel of the future is the speaker; the servant is again the righteous portion, which has at last succeeded in bringing the nation to its senses. The redeemed nation, looking back over the past, tells of its feelings as it watched the fortunes of the faithful. At first it thought that their sufferings were punishment for sin, as was the case with the wicked; but at last it came to see that all the sufferings were endured in order to win the faithless portion of the nation back to Jehovah.

That this is the right interpretation of these passages is shown also by the fact, to which attention is

called in several places, that the servant is to have an important part in the restoration of the exiles from captivity and in bringing them to a true knowledge of Jehovah. Only when the righteous nucleus has accomplished this task, the whole redeemed nation may enter upon its larger work, to lead all nations to a knowledge of the true God. This greater work receives special emphasis in chapters 54ff.

The Fulfillment of Isa. 52. 13—53. 12. Christians are accustomed to look upon the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah as a Messianic passage finding its fulfillment in Jesus the Christ; and the above interpretation does not interfere with this view. The "servant," whoever he may have been in the mind of the prophet, remains a type of Jesus. Israel, the servant of redemption, through disobedience cut itself off, as a nation, from God and its place in his plan of redemption. As a result its place became vacated, and another servant had to be substituted. This other servant, Christians rightly believe, was Jesus the Christ. He was the true and perfect servant, who wrought a salvation far superior to that which Israel ever could have accomplished, a salvation not for time only, but for eternity, not external only, but internal, not only for the nation as a whole, but for every individual in the nation, not for Israel alone, but for mankind.

Glories of the Messianic Age. Perhaps no other prophet portrays the glories and splendor of the future kingdom of God as vividly as does the author of these chapters. The spiritual restoration of Israel and the return to its former home mark the inauguration of a new age, "an age of universal salvation in which all nations share in the blessings that flow

from the knowledge of the true God." The completeness of the transformation is indicated in the promise that a new heaven and a new earth will be established (65. 17, 18). As in the other prophetic books, Jerusalem is expected to be the center of the new kingdom, to which all the nations of the earth will come with their gifts. It will be illumined with a light and splendor that proceed from Jehovah himself (chapter 60). Israel will be the priestly mediator between Jehovah and the nations (61. 5, 6). The curse of barrenness will be removed from the land, the wilderness will become like Eden and the desert like the garden of Jehovah (51. 3). The peace of paradise will also be restored (65. 25).

Material prosperity and magnificence occupy a large place in the expectations of the prophet: the architectural beauty of Zion (54. 11, 12; 60. 13, 17), its wealth (60. 5–7, 9, 13, 16; 61. 6; 66. 12), security in the enjoyment of these blessings (57. 13; 62. 8, 9), and a plentiful population (49. 17ff.; 54. 1ff.).

Emphasis upon the Externals of Religion. The externals of religion receive more emphasis than they do from the earlier prophets. Sabbath observance is enjoined (56. 2, 6; 58. 13), burnt offerings and other sacrifices are commended (56. 7), the riches of the nations will be used for the beautifying of Jehovah's sanctuary (60. 13). But the prophet by no means overlooks the weightier matters. He makes it clear throughout the entire prophecy that only those who live in true heart fellowship with Jehovah can enjoy the glories of the new age; and his description of the ideal fast resembles in every respect the high ethical teaching of the eighth century prophets (58. 6, 7).

CHAPTER XI

HAGGAI AND ZECHARIAH

FROM THE RETURN TO THE DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE IN 516 B. C.

Date of Haggai and Zechariah. Haggai and Zechariah were contemporaries. The utterances of Haggai are all dated in the second year of Darius Hystaspis, king of Persia, that is, in 520 B. C. During that year he spoke on four occasions: on the first day of the sixth month (1. 1), on the twenty-first day of the seventh month (2. 1), and twice on the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month (2. 10, 20). The activity of Zechariah began in the second year of King Darius, in the eighth month (1. 1), that is, about two months after Haggai began preaching. The last date mentioned is the fourth day of the ninth month of the fourth year of Darius (7. 1). Since Zechariah was probably a young man when the prophetic call came to him, his influence may have been felt for many years subsequent to 518 B. C.

The First Return from Exile. Babylon fell into the hands of Cyrus in 538. Soon after the occupancy of the city he gave permission to the Jews to return to their former homes, and encouraged in every way the restoration of the Jewish commonwealth. This leniency, shown also toward other nations deported by his predecessors, was undoubtedly due, in part at least, to political considerations. A clash with Egypt was inevitable; hence it was to the interest of Cyrus

to have on the Egyptian border a state that was bound to him by the strongest ties of gratitude, and upon the fidelity of which he could rely. In the spring of 537 a large company started on the homeward journey. On reaching Jerusalem the returned exiles immediately set up the altar of burnt offerings (Ezra 3. 2ff.; compare Hag. 2. 14), and, according to Ezra 3. 8–13, they laid, in the second year, the foundation of the temple.

Cessation of Building Operations. However, the first enthusiasm soon grew cold and building operations ceased. The reasons for this are not far to seek: (1) During their stay in Babylon the exiles had learned to do without the temple; only the religious zealots, always in the minority, would miss it. (2) The opposition of the Samaritans and other surrounding tribes would offer a ready excuse to the indifferent Jews. (3) The nonfulfillment of the earlier prophecies concerning the glories of the restoration would tend to develop religious indifference and skepticism. (4) Limited resources and poverty resulting from the failure of the crops (1. 6) and from the devastation wrought by the Persian armies on their way to Egypt could and would be urged. It is not difficult, then, to see how building operations begun in 536 might come to a complete standstill.

Events Affecting the Fortunes of Persia. While the postexilic community was struggling against great odds to establish itself in and near Jerusalem, important events were taking place in the outside world. Cyrus died in 529, leaving to his son Cambyses an empire extending from Lydia in the west to India in the east. Cambyses, who reigned until 521, added

Egypt to his possessions. He was followed by a usurper, Gaumata, who pretended to be Smerdis, the son of Cyrus, but after a reign of seven months he was assassinated and Darius Hystaspis was raised to the throne. He found the empire in a state of great restlessness; rebellions broke out everywhere, province after province revolted; in Babylon two pretenders attempted, in rapid succession, to throw off the Persian rule. The whole empire was shaken from end to end.

Interpretation of these Events by the Prophets. Haggai and Zechariah, like their predecessors in the prophetic office, read the signs of the times. They saw in the widespread rebellions an indication of the impending doom of the Persian empire (Hag. 2. 6, 7, 22), and of the expiration of the seventy years of chastisement (Jer. 25. 11). They were also convinced that, with the hostile world power removed, the way would be clear for the establishment of the kingdom of God. But in the thought of the two prophets the establishment of the Messianic kingdom was closely connected with the rebuilding of the temple and the exaltation of a descendant of David. Hence the earnest exhortations to resume building operations and the promises to Zerubbabel, the servant of Jehovah.

Religious and Moral Conditions. The one outstanding feature seems to have been religious indifference, due to the causes already mentioned, especially to disappointment. The preëxilic and exilic prophets had pictured the glories of the restoration in the brightest colors, and thus had raised the hopes and expectations of the returning exiles to the highest pitch; but when the years passed without the realization of these hopes, indifference and skepticism settled

upon them. Why serve a God who failed to fulfill the promises made by his prophets? For this reason the people looked after their own comforts, while they neglected the interests of the sanctuary (Hag. 1. 9), excusing themselves by saying that the time for the building of the temple had not yet arrived (Hag. 1. 2). On the other hand, they brought sacrifices and offerings (Hag. 2. 14), and the ritual law was observed in other respects (Hag. 2. 11–13). Chapters 7, 8 of Zechariah show that feasts and fasts were observed. Otherwise we are left in the dark concerning religious and moral conditions in Judah at this time.

THE PROPHETS HAGGAI AND ZECHARIAH

Haggai. Haggai appears upon the scene suddenly in 520 B. C., and disappears just as suddenly. Nothing is known of his life before or after his preaching. Chiefly on the basis of 2. 3 it has been suggested that he was one of a small company that had seen the former temple in its glory. If so, he must have been an old man when he prophesied; and this supposition agrees with the brevity of his public activity.

Zechariah. Zechariah was the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo (1. 1). Iddo was the chief of one of the priestly families that returned from exile with Zerubbabel and Joshua (Neh. 12. 4). Outside of the Book of Zechariah the prophet is mentioned in Ezra 5. 1; 6. 14 as instrumental, with Haggai, in reviving interest in the rebuilding of the temple. In Neh. 12. 16 a priest Zechariah is mentioned, who may be identical with our prophet. If he was the grandson of Iddo, who returned in 537, Zechariah was probably a young man when he began his prophetic ministry;

hence the influence of his personality may have been felt for many years subsequent to the latest date mentioned in the book, 518 B. C., but of the later years of the prophet nothing is known.

Task of the Prophets. The age needed prophets with living faith and moral earnestness. The lofty anticipations of the preëxilic and exilic prophets had not been realized; the foreign oppressor was still strong and powerful, while the Jews were poor and feeble. As a result the first hopeful enthusiasm of the returned exiles had been displaced by despondency and gloom. To remove these and to revive faith in God and in the ultimate triumph of his kingdom was the task of Haggai and Zechariah.

THE MESSAGE OF HAGGAI

The Book of Haggai contains four separate utterances, 1. 1–11; 2. 1–9; 2. 10–19; 2. 20–23, the first three dealing more or less directly with the rebuilding of the temple, and an historical section (1. 12–15), which describes the effects of the first discourse.

Rebuke of Indifference; Exhortation to Resume Building Operations, 1. 1–11. The first address (1. 1–11) was intended primarily for Zerubbabel and Joshua, the civil and ecclesiastical heads of the community (1. 1). The prophet rebukes the religious indifference that has permitted the people to erect comfortable houses for themselves, while the temple remained in ruins (2–4). He calls attention to the disappointments, distress, and suffering which they are experiencing as a result of drought, and tells them that these afflictions have come to them as divine judgments for their religious apathy. If they would

find relief they must speedily restore the dwelling place of Jehovah (5–11).

Resumption of Building Operations, 1. 12–15. The preaching of Haggai aroused the consciences of leaders and people, so that they feared Jehovah (12). When the prophet saw indications of a revival of interest he changed his message of rebuke into one of encouragement and promise (13); whereupon, on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, building operations were commenced (14, 15).

Message of Encouragement to the Builders, 2. 1–9. It would seem that when the first enthusiasm had died down, people began to think more soberly about the obstacles to be encountered. Their numbers were small, the building material was costly, some of it had to be brought from a distance, there were no resources such as Solomon could draw upon, and no allies to assist in the work; instead, they had to suffer much from their neighbors. Under these discouraging conditions the fervor of some grew cold, and malcontents found ready listeners. What was the use of it all? They could not expect ever to equal the temple of Solomon. Why not quit work? Haggai saw that the enterprise was threatened with failure unless he could revive the former interest and enthusiasm. He therefore addresses the builders, "Be strong, . . . for I am with you, saith Jehovah of hosts" (2. 1–4). The present outlook may be dark, but there is no ground for discouragement, for the covenant made at the time of the Exodus is still in force, and Jehovah will be with his people. In the end the new temple, enriched by the wealth of the nations, that are about to be shaken violently, shall be more glorious than the temple of Solomon (5–9).

Completion of the Temple a Sure Guarantee of the Return of the Divine Favor, 2. 10–19. In a short time new questions arose among the people. Were they really as bad as Haggai had tried to make out in his first discourse? And if not, how much truth was there in his statements that their calamities were due to their neglect of the temple, and in his promise that prosperity would be restored as soon as they would rebuild the temple? To silence these doubts and questionings is the purpose of the third discourse. The prophet propounds to the priests certain questions concerning the relative power of infection possessed by clean and unclean things. The priests reply that the clean is less contagious than the unclean (10–13). This answer the prophet applies to the case in hand. True, they offer gifts, but they are insufficient to overcome the unclean in their lives, especially the indifference toward the temple; on the contrary, their uncleanness makes even their sacrifices an abomination in the sight of Jehovah (14). Once more he discusses the relation between their calamities and their neglectfulness, and shows that the former are the direct result of the latter; then he closes with the promise that henceforth the divine favor will rest upon them (15–19).

Exaltation of Zerubbabel, the Servant of Jehovah, 2. 20-23. The fourth utterance is Messianic in character. It promises the exaltation of Zerubbabel, the prince of David's house. In the second discourse the prophet announced the shaking of the nations of the earth (2. 6, 7); this announcement he now repeats, and adds the promise that the shaking will pave the way for the establishment of the kingdom of God

under the rule of Zerubbabel, the servant and chosen one of Jehovah (2. 20–23).

THE TEACHING OF HAGGAI

Unique Place Assigned to the Temple. Haggai was a man of one idea, the speedy restoration of the dwelling place of Jehovah. The preëxilic prophets also considered the temple the dwelling place of Jehovah, but their teaching dwelt almost exclusively upon weightier ethical and spiritual matters. With Haggai the rebuilding of the temple is of primary importance. It does not follow, however, that his religious capacity was inferior to theirs. The change in emphasis was due rather to a change in conditions. The Hebrew prophets were raised up primarily to meet the problems of their day and generation. Now conditions in Jerusalem after the exile were far different from those in the eighth century B. C. As a prophet of Jehovah Haggai must adapt himself and his message to the changed conditions; he must interpret religion "in accordance with the needs of a new age." The supreme need was a visible, earthly temple. True, some of the prophets speak of a time when a house made with hands will be needed no longer (Isa. 66. 1, 2), but the Jews of the latter part of the sixth century were not yet prepared to grasp this lofty conception of the presence of Jehovah. As was the ark in the ages gone by, so now the temple was the outward symbol of the presence of Jehovah, and if the Jews were to continue the worship of Jehovah they still needed a material temple. Besides, with the central national government gone, a new bond was needed to draw together the different elements in the community and the exiles scattered among the nations. In a reli-

gious community what could serve this purpose better than a common center of worship, a place to which the hearts of the faithful Jews might turn, even from the uttermost parts of the earth, assured that there they would meet their God? Is it, then, too much to say that, humanly speaking, the very existence of the Jewish religion was dependent upon the rebuilding of the temple? But if this is true, Haggai, by pleading so persistently for the rebuilding of the house of God, did a service of incalculable moment.

Summary of Haggai's Teaching. Other features of Haggai's teaching are: (1) He calls attention to *the covenant relation between Jehovah and Israel*, and to the former's continued care for the latter (2. 5); this covenant, he declares, will continue forever (1. 13; 2. 4). (2) He agrees with the preëxilic prophets in declaring that *sacrifice is not the essential thing in the sight of God* (2. 14). (3) He shares the older prophets' ideas concerning *the causes of calamity and prosperity.* The former he considers an expression of the divine wrath, a punishment for sin; the latter an expression of the divine favor, a reward for piety (1. 6–11; 2. 15–19). (4) He expects *a great world judgment* which will result in the overthrow of the nations; this overthrow is to clear the way for the establishment of the kingdom of God upon earth (2. 6, 7, 21, 22). (5) His *Messianic hope centers around an offspring of the dynasty of David*, Zerubbabel, who is the servant of Jehovah, his chosen one, the object of his affection (2. 23); he also thinks of Jehovah as ruling forever in the temple (2. 9). (6) Of great significance is *the universalism of Haggai.* In 2. 7 he expresses the hope that the nations of the earth, overawed by Jehovah's majesty and power, will

recognize his supremacy and bring their precious things as offerings to him.

Haggai's One Idea Seen in All his Teaching. The presentation of these truths is highly colored by the prophet's one idea. He alludes to the covenant only to encourage the people to greater zeal in their building operations; sacrifice he mentions to show that it cannot atone for their neglect of the temple. Their calamity or prosperity is determined by their attitude toward the restoration of the house of God; the overthrow and conversion of the nations will result in the enriching of the temple; the establishment of the kingdom of God and the exaltation of Zerubbabel will be the supreme manifestations of the divine favor, but they will be theirs only if they build a dwelling place for Jehovah.

THE MESSAGE OF ZECHARIAH

Call to Repentance, 1. 1–6. Zechariah delivered his first message about two months after Haggai's first appearance. The book opens with a call to repentance, in which Zechariah urges his hearers to return to Jehovah, that they may enjoy once more the divine favor. He reinforces this exhortation by an appeal to the experiences of their ancestors, who suffered severe punishments because they disregarded the teaching of the prophets. The disobedience of the present generation may be followed by a similar catastrophe (1. 1–6).

Eight Night Visions, 1. 7—6. 8. About three months after Zechariah's first utterance there came to him in one single night a series of symbolical visions. Their significance was made plain to him by a heavenly

interpreter (1. 7—6. 8). All these visions have one common purpose, "the encouragement of the Jews to continue the work of restoring the temple and rebuilding the city, and the reëstablishing of the theocratic government."

(1) *The Angelic Horsemen*, 1. 7–17. In the first vision—the angelic horsemen—the prophet beholds a man riding upon a horse standing among myrtle trees (1. 7, 8); he is accompanied by other horsemen, who report that they have walked to and fro and have found the whole earth at rest (9–11). Since a shaking of the nations must precede the establishment of the kingdom of God (Hag. 2. 6, 7, 21, 22), the report meant that there was no sign of the approach of the Messianic era. This is a disappointment to the angel who receives the report, and he inquires of Jehovah how long he will delay his gracious interference (12), to which Jehovah replies that though the shaking may be delayed he will surely return to his people and bless them and their land with abundant prosperity (13–17). The vision, therefore, is a message of encouragement to the despondent people to retain faith in Jehovah, for he will surely fulfill the Messianic promises of the past.

(2) *The Four Horns and the Four Smiths*, 1. 18–21. The second vision—the four horns and the four smiths—pictures the execution of judgment upon Israel's enemies. The prophet beholds four horns. Upon inquiry he is told by the interpreter that the horns symbolize the nations that have scattered the Jews. He also sees four smiths, who, he is informed, represent the divinely appointed agents to execute judgment upon the hostile nations (1. 18–21).

(3) *The Man with the Measuring Line*, 2. 1–13. The overthrow of the nations will prepare the way for the exaltation of the now oppressed people: Jerusalem will be rebuilt, Jehovah will return to live in Zion, and many nations will join themselves to the redeemed community. To impress these truths upon prophet and people is the purpose of the third vision—the man with the measuring line (2. 1–13). Zechariah sees a man with a measuring line in his hand, going forth to measure Jerusalem, for the purpose of determining the location of the new walls (1, 2). He is informed that walls are not necessary because (1) the city will be too populous to be contained within walls, and (2) Jehovah himself will be a wall of fire around her (3–5). The vision proper is followed by an exhortation to the exiled Jews to get ready to flee from the land of exile (6, 7), for Jehovah is about to shake the nations (8, 9); then he will return to Zion, to take his permanent abode there (10–13).

(4) *The Trial of the High Priest, Chapter* 3. The first, second, and third visions deal with the judgment upon the nations, the restoration from exile, the rebuilding of city and temple, and the expansion of the new community to the four corners of the earth. But to bring about permanent peace and harmony between Jehovah and his people there is needed, in addition to all these things, a moral and spiritual regeneration. This regeneration is symbolized in the fourth vision—the trial and acquittal of the high priest Joshua (3. 1–10). Zechariah sees the high priest Joshua standing before the angel of Jehovah; at his right hand is the adversary, ready to bring accusations against him; but before he can present the charges he

is severely rebuked (1, 2). At the command of the angel the servants take from Joshua his filthy garments and clothe him in the rich garments of the high-priestly office (3–5). Whereupon the angel instructs Joshua in the duties and responsibilities of the office to which he is restored, and promises him access to the Most High, if he will properly discharge his duties (6, 7). He and his followers are proclaimed a sign of the coming of "Branch," who will remove iniquity from the land in one day, and restore peace and prosperity forever (8–10).

These experiences come to the high priest not as an individual, but as the representative of the people. Whatever befalls him affects the whole people. His cleansing symbolizes the cleansing of the people, his restoration the restoration of the people to intimate fellowship with their God. Because the cleansing of the high priest symbolizes this regeneration, he can become a sign of the coming of "Branch," who will complete the task and become the ruler of the regenerated community.

(5) *The Golden Candlestick and the Two Olive Trees, Chapter* 4. The fourth and fifth visions are closely connected. The former centers around the person of the ecclesiastical head, Joshua, the high priest; the latter—the vision of the golden candlestick and the two olive trees—centers around the person of the civil head, Zerubbabel, the governor. In the vision Zechariah beholds a golden candlestick with seven lamps; on top was an oil reservoir connected with the lamps by pipes. Beside it stood two olive trees; from the overhanging branches of these oil flowed continually into the reservoir and from it into the lamps (4. 1–14).

It may not be possible to determine the meaning of every feature of this vision, but its general purpose is clear. "It is intended to encourage Zerubbabel in the work of rebuilding the temple by impressing upon him the truth that, as that candlestick gave forth its light in silent, ceaseless splendor, unfed and untended by human agencies, so the work in which he was engaged" should surely be accomplished through the Divine Spirit's coöperation with him. The mountains of difficulty will be brought low, and he will carry his divinely appointed task to completion.

(6) *The Flying Roll;* (7) *The Woman in the Ephah, Chapter* 5. The sixth and seventh visions—the flying roll and the woman in the ephah—serve similar ends. The removal of all iniquity is promised in 3. 9; the two visions indicate two methods by which it will be accomplished, namely, the destruction of the wicked and the removal of sin to a far-distant land, where it will curse Israel's former oppressors. In the sixth vision the prophet beholds flying through the air an immense roll, symbolizing the curse of God upon evil-doers of every kind. He is informed that the roll will enter the house of every wicked man and consume it utterly (5. 1–4). In the seventh vision the prophet sees an ephah, in which sits a woman; upon its mouth is a cover. Two women with wings lift up the ephah and carry it through the air. Upon inquiry he is told that the woman is to be deposited in the land of Shinar. As the vision unfolds the interpreter explains its symbolical meaning. The woman represents wickedness, which is to be removed from the land (3. 9). She is fastened securely in the ephah, but to reduce the danger of pollution to a minimum she is carried

to the distant Shinar, there to be established forever (5. 5–11).

(8) *The Four Chariots with Horses of Different Colors*, 6. 1–8. In the eighth and last vision—the four chariots with horses of different colors—the prophet sees coming from between two mountains four chariots drawn by horses of different colors (6. 1–4). According to the present Hebrew text, two were commissioned to go toward the north, and one toward the south; the destination of the fourth is not indicated. It is not improbable, however, that originally the four points of the compass were mentioned, one chariot being sent to each. The chariots represent divine messengers of judgment, and the vision is intended to reveal the fate that is to befall the enemies of the Jews, especially those in the north country. When the judgment upon the north country is executed, the anger of Jehovah is appeased and his spirit is quieted (5–8). This vision, then, like the first, is meant to assure the prophet that Jehovah is about to execute judgment upon the nations hostile to him and to his people.

Crowning of the High Priest Joshua, 6. 9–15. The series of symbolical visions is followed by a command to perform a symbolical act (9–15), which is so closely connected with the preceding visions that it seems best to consider this section a sort of appendix to them. The prophet is urged to adorn the high priest Joshua with a crown made of the silver and gold sent by the exiles from Babylon (9–11), and to proclaim him the type of "Branch," who is about to appear to complete the temple and to rule over the people. His fame will spread quickly, and those who

are afar off will come and join in the building enterprise (12–15).

The Essence of True Religion, Chapters 7, 8. After a silence of nearly two years the voice of Zechariah was heard again. In the fourth year of King Darius a deputation came to the prophet, inquiring whether the observance of the fasts instituted to commemorate the destruction of Jerusalem was still obligatory (7. 1–3). This question would suggest itself to many as the temple neared completion and the seventy years since the destruction of Jerusalem were drawing to a close. In reply the prophet points out that fasting is not an end in itself, that it is of value only as a means of increasing devotion and piety in the one who practices it (4–6). Then he turns the attention of the delegation to the ethical character of the divine demands and shows that by disregarding these their fathers had brought upon themselves awful judgments (7–14). Reaffirming Jehovah's jealousy for Zion, he pictures the glory and prosperity in store for Judah and Jerusalem (8. 1–17). When these glories are realized the question of fasts will solve itself, for they will be transformed into seasons of joy and rejoicing, to which multitudes will flock from all parts of the land. Even foreign nations will gladly join the Jews in their festivities (18–23).

THE TEACHING OF ZECHARIAH

Zechariah and his Predecessors. Zechariah differs widely from the prophets who preceded him in three points: (1) in the emphasis which he places upon visions as a means of divine communication; (2) in the apocalyptic symbolism that enters into the visions;

(3) in the large place occupied by angelic mediation in his intercourse with Jehovah. The first two concern chiefly the form of revelation; only the last may be considered an element in his teaching.

Angels in Zech. 1–8. In Zech. 1–8 we have in embryo some of the ideas which are found in a fuller stage of development in the later Jewish and New Testament angelology. Here we find also the beginning of the tendency so widespread in the later Judaism to look upon Jehovah as too sacred to come into direct contact with human beings. Even prophecy seems to have lost in a measure its sense of immediate communion with God. The prophet receives his instruction through an angel, who acts as intermediary, interpreter, and guide. Angels appear in the unfolding of the visions, they carry forward the events symbolized, and they are active participants in the working out of human history. Here also is used for the first time the noun "Satan." With Zechariah the word is not yet a proper name; a literal translation of the phrase in 3. 1 is "the Adversary" (so margin R. V.); it becomes a proper name only in 1 Chron. 21. 1; but the adversary of Zechariah is closely related to the adversary who plays such an important part in the Book of Job, to Satan—now a proper name—in 1 Chron. 21. 1, and to the Satan of the New Testament.

Unique Place of the Temple. From beginning to end Zechariah pleads for the rebuilding of the house of Jehovah, and his sublimest promises center around the completed temple. With him the rebuilding of the dwelling place of Jehovah is an indispensable condition of the arrival of the Messianic era. "As the

commencement of the judgment formerly showed itself when the glory of Jehovah was seen by Ezekiel to forsake the temple, so upon the day when Jehovah once more makes his abode with his people all the distress of the time shall come to an end; in short, this dwelling of Jehovah in the temple is the *sine qua non* of the dawn of the Messianic age." This high estimation of the priesthood and the temple, and so of the externals of religion, is not the outgrowth of lower spiritual conceptions, but rather of a clear appreciation of the needs of the hour. The Jews had not yet reached the stage of religious and spiritual development when they could afford to discard forms and symbols; they still needed the temple as a symbol of the presence of Jehovah. Besides, in an age when religion was the only bond that united the heterogeneous elements in the postexilic community, it was needed as a common place of worship. Continued existence without a temple would have resulted, humanly speaking, in the loss of true religion to the world. The fullness of time, when people would worship Jehovah "neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem," but everywhere in spirit and in truth, had not yet arrived.

The Messianic Hope. Of importance are also the Messianic hopes of Zechariah. The temple plays a prominent part, but only as an earnest of better things to come; the high priest and his fellows receive honor, but only as signs of one greater than they, of "Branch." Around the person of this Branch center the Messianic hopes of Zechariah. It is he who shall complete the building of the temple, who shall have constant access to Jehovah, who shall reign in peace forever. The prophet identifies Branch with Zerub-

babel (4. 7); in his person, therefore, a descendant of David comes once more to the front, destined to occupy a prominent place in the kingdom of God. The blessings of the Messianic age will be both temporal (for example, 1. 17; 2. 4, 5) and spiritual (for example, 2. 10; 3. 9); they will be enjoyed primarily by the Jews, but not by them exclusively. True, some of the nations are destined to be "a spoil to those that served them," but the prophet also anticipates the conversion of some outsiders: "And many nations shall join themselves to Jehovah in that day, and shall be my people" (2. 11).

The Essential Requirements of Jehovah. Zechariah has been accused of being the teacher of a heartless and unspiritual formalism. An unbiased study of his prophecies proves this accusation to be false, for he teaches plainly that forms and ceremonies are not essential elements of true religion (compare chapters 7, 8). His conception of the requirements of Jehovah is indicated in these words: "Speak ye every man the truth with his neighbor; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates; and let none of you devise evil in your hearts against his neighbor; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith Jehovah" (8. 16, 17). He values forms and ceremonies only as means of grace, by the use of which men may be led into purer and nobler lives. His conception of the Messianic age includes the removal of sin from land and people (chapters 3 and 5).

The Ultimate Triumph of Israel Dependent on Divine Cooperation. Another truth constantly emphasized by Zechariah is that the ultimate triumph is dependent on the divine cooperation. "Not by might,

nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts" (4. 6). These words have reference primarily to the rebuilding of the temple, but the prophet insists from beginning to end that the success and well-being of the people depends upon the divine favor and coöperation.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF ZECHARIAH 9–14

In view of the fact that many scholars, conservative and advanced, consider chapters 9–14 not the work of Zechariah, the contemporary of Haggai, it seems best to study these chapters separately. Whatever their exact date, they undoubtedly presuppose an historical situation within Jerusalem and without different from that which gave rise to the utterances embodied in chapters 1–8. "Zech. 1–8 picture the whole earth at peace, which was true at least of all Syria; they portend no danger to Jerusalem from the heathen, but describe her peace and fruitful expansion in terms most suitable to the circumstances imposed upon her by the solid and clement policy of the earlier Persian kings. This is all changed in 9–14. The nations are restless; a siege of Jerusalem is imminent, and her salvation is to be assured only by much war and a terrible shedding of blood. We know exactly how Israel fared and felt in the early sections of the Persian period; her interest in the politics of the world, her feelings toward her governors, and her whole attitude toward the heathen were not at that time those which are reflected in Zech. 9–14." Some hold that the chapters are preëxilic, others that they are postexilic; on the whole, the latter is the more probable, and in the postexilic period, a date not earlier than 350 B. C.

CONTENTS OF ZECHARIAH 9–14

Zech. 9–14 consists of various oracles, loosely connected, dealing for the most part with events leading up to the final triumph of the kingdom of God.

Overthrow of the Nations, the Messianic King, and his Victories, 9. 1—10. 2. The section opens with a threat against the nations surrounding Palestine. A judgment proceeding from the north or northeast will fall in succession upon Syria, Phœnicia, and Philistia (9. 1–7). While these nations are wiped out Jerusalem will rest in safety (8). After the overthrow of these nations the Messianic king will appear, to establish his throne in Zion and reign in righteousness and peace over the redeemed remnant (9, 10). The advent of the Messianic king will be followed by the restoration of the Jews still in exile (11, 12) and the overthrow of the hostile nations through the restored exiles (13, 14). The struggle will be bloody, but Jehovah will deliver his people and exalt them to glory (15–17). The prophet is not content with anticipating the glories of the future; he is anxious to transform the present; hence he exhorts his contemporaries to turn even now to Jehovah, the giver of every good and perfect gift (10. 1, 2).

Restoration of the Jews and the Overthrow of the Hostile Nations, 10. 3—11. 3. The restoration of the Jews and the overthrow of the hostile nations is pictured once more in 10. 3—11. 3. When the Jews came into the power of hostile nations they were governed by cruel foreign rulers. But a change is about to take place, for Jehovah will cut off the bad shepherds and deliver the oppressed flock (3). The survivors of Judah and Ephraim will be transformed

into mighty men (4–7), and Jehovah will bring them back from Assyria and Egypt to dwell in their own land (8–12), where they may rejoice over the wonderful deliverance, while the hostile powers wail and lament over their own complete undoing (11. 1–3).

The Good Shepherd and the Foolish Shepherd, 11. 4–17; 13. 7–9. In 11. 4ff. the prophet takes a look into the past. In the form of an allegory he describes Jehovah's dealings with his people, the ingratitude of the latter, the divine wrath, and the resulting judgment. Jehovah appointed a good shepherd to give protection and care to the flock, which Jehovah had determined to deliver from its oppressors (4–6), but the flock was so unappreciative (7, 8) that finally the shepherd decided to discontinue the shepherding care (9–14). The result was disastrous, for Jehovah gave the flock into the hands of a foolish shepherd, who not only neglected the sheep but abused and destroyed them to satisfy his own lust (15, 16). This condition will not continue forever. The foolish shepherd will be slain, and though a large part of the flock will be cut off as punishment for the treatment accorded to the good shepherd, one third will be preserved, purified, and restored to Jehovah's favor (11. 17; 13. 7–9).

Wonderful Deliverance of Judah and Jerusalem, 12. 1–9. A new beginning is made in 12. 1. The remaining chapters of the book deal with the future of Israel. The section falls naturally into two parts, 12. 1—13. 6 and 14. 1–21; chapter 13. 5–7 is best understood as the conclusion of 11. 4–17. The first part consists of three divisions. The first of these (12. 1–9) pictures a wonderful deliverance of Judah

and Jerusalem. The prophet beholds the nations of the earth gathered around Jerusalem to besiege it, where Jehovah smites them with terror (1–4). When the chieftains of Judah, who appear to have remained inactive during the early part of the struggle, see that Jehovah fights for Jerusalem, they turn their weapons against the nations. Jehovah saves the tents of Judah first, to prevent the inhabitants of Jerusalem from magnifying themselves above the country districts, but he delivers Jerusalem also from all danger (5–9).

The Penitential Mourning and Subsequent Fellowship with Jehovah, 12. 10—13. 6. From the triumph in battle the prophet turns to the spiritual blessings awaiting the people of God. In order to enjoy these fully they must first of all turn to Jehovah with heartfelt repentance. When the people become fully conscious of the depth of the divine mercy manifesting itself in the wonderful deliverance described in verses 1–9, they will be seized by an intense sorrow for their past sins and prostrate themselves in deep humility before Jehovah (10–14). The penitential mourning and supplication will not be in vain. Jehovah will be merciful, remove all sin, and bring about a complete moral transformation in the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Intimate fellowship with Jehovah will be restored, and everything that in any way might hinder direct communion with him will be swept away; even prophecy, as a distinct office, will be abolished (13. 1–6).

Ultimate Triumph and Glorification of Jerusalem, Chapter 14. In chapter 14 the prophet pictures a new conflict between Jerusalem and the nations. In 12. 1–9 the enemies are described as smitten before they are able to capture the city; here the threat is

that "the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity." Only then Jehovah will appear for the salvation of a remnant and the setting up of his kingdom (1–7). From Jerusalem, the dwelling place of Jehovah, two streams of living waters will go forth, covering the whole land with blessing and fertility (8–11). The nations that have come to war against Jerusalem will be destroyed, and their wealth will be given to the Jews (12–15). Those who escape will turn to Jehovah in true worship; those who refuse to do so will be smitten with drought (16–19). Jerusalem and Judah and all that is in them will be holy unto Jehovah (20, 21).

TEACHING OF ZECHARIAH 9–14

Exaltation of the Jews. Like the other Old Testament prophets, the author of these chapters expects the restoration and exaltation of the Jews. Chapters 9. 1—11. 3 promise the restoration and reunion of Judah and Israel under the rule of the Messianic king, and the triumph of the reunited nation over all enemies. However, these triumphs can be theirs only on certain conditions. Their rebellion has frequently robbed them of Jehovah's favor; it may do so again, and instead of immediate salvation additional judgment may be their fate. Chapters 12 and 14 picture these judgments, but there is always added the promise that in the end the Jews will triumph over their enemies and enjoy abundant temporal prosperity. However, this is only one phase of the author's eschatological hope. In addition, rich spiritual gifts await the redeemed remnant. Uncleanness, even

the spirit of uncleanness, will be taken away; so also everything that in any way might hinder direct personal communion with Jehovah. The transformation will be so complete that both men and things in Judah and Jerusalem will be holy unto Jehovah. That ceremonial holiness should occupy a prominent place in these pictures cannot appear strange when we remember that all postexilic prophecy lays great stress upon the externals of religion, but in justice to the author we should not forget that he is not content with external cleansing. Chapter 13. 1ff. implies a great moral and spiritual regeneration; and the emphasis which he places upon heartfelt repentance (12. 10–14) is evidence enough to show that this author, like the preëxilic prophets, has a clear apprehension of the essentials of true Jehovah religion and of the divine plan of redemption.

Sovereignty of Jehovah. The author of chapters 9–14 is not behind the prophet Zechariah in recognizing that during the Messianic era Jehovah will be King of all the nations. True, Judah and Jerusalem will enjoy in a special manner the divine favor; true, the nations will suffer terrible disasters; but when the last conflict is over, a remnant of the nations will worship the King, Jehovah of hosts (14. 16–19). Jehovah will rule in the midst of his people, with Jerusalem as the center of his realm, and unto this center many nations will come, saying, "He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem."

The Messianic King. The person of the Messianic king appears in 9. 9, 10. The description of his person

and rule is, on the whole, in perfect accord with the portrayals found in other parts of the Old Testament. He is righteous and peaceful, and his sovereignty will be recognized everywhere. However, two new features are added, "having salvation" and "lowly." The thought of the first seems to be that the king will enjoy at all times the divine help and favor, so that all he undertakes will prosper. The second means that he will be of lowly estate, and so better able to sympathize with those in similar condition. His interest will not be confined to the noble and wealthy.

The Rejected Shepherd. The parable of the good shepherd, who was rejected by the people, is a solemn warning against the frustration of the loving purpose of God through human obstinacy. It was the obstinacy of the people that had led them to reject the shepherd and had caused the calamities that followed the rejection. It may cause even greater distress and disaster unless the prophet's contemporaries take heed. The promises in chapters 9 and 10 are glorious. Will they be realized? All will depend upon the attitude of those for whom the blessings are intended. The obstinacy of the later Jews prevented their realization in the Jewish community. The sublime spiritual fulfillment of these prophecies was ushered in by Jesus, who, in the carrying out of the divine plan of redemption, suffered, as the result of human obstinacy, a rejection more bitter than that suffered by the good shepherd of this prophecy.

CHAPTER XII

MALACHI

THE AUTHOR OF THE BOOK

The Name Malachi. The last book in the collection of the Minor Prophets and in the entire Old Testament is assigned to Malachi (1. 1). By the second century A. D. *Malachi* had come to be generally regarded as a proper noun, the name of the author of the book, but before that date the Hebrew word, which means literally "my messenger" or "my angel," had been taken by many as a title of the author, whose real name, it was assumed, was not mentioned at all. For a long time Jewish tradition identified the author of the book with Ezra, while others conjectured that the author was an incarnate angel. The question has been revived in more recent times, some holding that Malachi is the name of the author, some that the book is anonymous, Malachi being introduced into the heading from 3. 1, where the same Hebrew word is translated "my messenger." Analogy with the other prophetic books would seem to favor the view that the name prefixed to a book is a proper name; on the other hand, the interpretation of the ancients is not without weight.

Character of the Author. Whoever was the author of the Book of Malachi or whatever his name, he is worthy to be called a "messenger of Jehovah." He was a man of deep convictions born of a personal religious experience and constant communion with

God, a man with deep insight into the needs and shortcomings of his contemporaries and into the mysteries of the divine love and purpose, which, he declared, would find its culmination in the establishment of the kingdom of God subsequent to the awful catastrophe of the day of Jehovah. Following in the footsteps of his great predecessors, this prophet declared, with no uncertain sound, the will of Jehovah to a priesthood and a people that had forgotten the covenant of old. He, like the other prophets, announced the certain and awful doom of the faithless and the exaltation and glorification of the faithful.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE PROPHECY

Date of the Prophecy. Internal evidence and comparison with the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah have convinced all scholars that the activity of Malachi is closely connected with the time and efforts of these two reformers. "The last chapter of canonical Jewish history is the key to the last chapter of its prophecy." Ezra came from Babylon in 458, Nehemiah about 445; and after an absence at the Persian court the latter made a second visit about 432. Whether Malachi prophesied shortly before the coming of Ezra or subsequent to it, perhaps as late as 432, in connection with the second visit of Nehemiah, though discussed for many years, cannot be determined with absolute certainty. Malachi, like Ezra and Nehemiah, saw the need of the hour, and sought to do his part toward bringing about a moral and spiritual reformation. Whether he was a few years earlier than they or their contemporary is a question of secondary importance. That they coöperated openly may be doubted in view

of the silence of the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah concerning such coöperation.

The Political Background. Zechariah's last utterance is dated in 518; the temple was completed and dedicated in 516; in 458 Ezra came to Jerusalem, and some time near the last date Malachi arose as a prophet of Jehovah. During the interval between 516 and 458 the struggle between Greece and Persia and two revolts against Persian supremacy in Egypt took place. To what extent the Jews were affected by these movements we do not know. Herodotus declares that Syrians from Palestine, which might include Jews, served in the army of Xerxes; and it is not improbable that they were called upon to furnish supplies for the Persian armies, especially in the wars with Egypt. On the whole, however, the attitude of the Persian court seems to have been friendly, and it is not unlikely that during the greater part of the period the Jews bore the yoke patiently. The two exceptions, mentioned in Ezra 4. 6 and 4. 7ff., may, perhaps, be traced to a revival of their Messianic hopes. Xerxes came upon the throne in 485; only a short time before this date Egypt had revolted; these events the Jews may have connected with the Messianic utterances of Haggai and Zechariah, the revolt in Egypt with the shaking of the nations promised in Hag. 2. 7. The second manifestation of unrest (Ezra 4. 7ff.) may have been connected with the second revolt in Egypt, in 462, and may have been caused by similar expectations. In 458 Ezra the scribe came from the east with rich presents from the king and from his countrymen still in exile, and with extraordinary powers and privileges. He was accompanied by other loyal Jews,

and after four months' journey they reached Jerusalem. After a brief period of activity Ezra disappears from view, and he is not heard of again until after Nehemiah had become civil governor in 445. After rebuilding the walls of the city Nehemiah undertook various social and religious reforms, in which he had the hearty support of Ezra, who reappeared as suddenly as some years previously he had disappeared. Some time later Nehemiah was recalled to the Persian court. When he returned to Jerusalem in 432 he found that the reforms had been undone, and that new evils were threatening the integrity of the community. Immediately he set about to rectify all these abuses, and with an account of the new reforms the narrative in the Book of Nehemiah closes.

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS

Indifference Caused by Disappointment. Haggai and Zechariah labored earnestly to counteract the religious indifference which had grown up in the community during the years immediately following the return from Babylon. They succeeded in arousing sufficient enthusiasm in the people to complete the temple; but as the causes of the indifference were not removed, it is not strange that very soon the enthusiasm died out and the former indifference, with its accompanying evils, reappeared. The glorious expectations of the preëxilic prophets remained unrealized, and the new promises of Haggai and Zechariah were not fulfilled. The nations of the earth were not shaken (Hag. 2. 6, 7), and though the revolts in Egypt seemed to give promise of such shaking, in the end Persia remained supreme, while Judah remained subject to

foreigners. The glory of Solomon's temple was not equaled, much less surpassed (Hag. 2. 9); taxes had to be paid and provision furnished to the Persian armies, which kept the people poor. Mal. 3. 9ff. implies that harvests had again failed as the result of drought and plagues of locusts, which was in direct contradiction to the promise of Haggai (2. 19).

The Rise of Skepticism. In consequence of these various disappointments many in the nation began to ask, Where are the promises made to the fathers? What has become of the divine justice (2. 17)? What of the divine interest in us? But if Jehovah does not care, why should we continue to waste our offerings and sacrinces in his service (3. 7–12)? The disappointments mentioned were troublesome enough, but those in Judah who would retain faith in Jehovah were confronted by another perplexity. According to the popular conception piety should be rewarded invariably with prosperity, impiety with adversity. But there grew up in Jerusalem during the first half of the fifth century a class of godless nobles who, by the use of unscrupulous means, accumulated wealth and lived in luxury and splendor (3. 13ff.), and again the question arose, Where is the God of justice? Thus the people might look within or without, and comparing present conditions with the promises of their prophets they would meet grave perplexities and problems on every hand. Small wonder that many, who perhaps had never attained a strong living faith, gave way to a temper of moroseness, skepticism, or even positive hostility to Jehovah.

Neglect of the Temple Service. The moral and religious conditions reflected in the Book of Malachi

and in the portions of Ezra and Nehemiah dealing with the same period were the outgrowth of this religious indifference and skepticism. The first glimpse which the book gives us (1. 6—2. 9) reveals the neglect of the temple worship by both priests and people. The priests performed their offices perfunctorily, and they showed by their actions that their heart was not in their work. Anything, they thought, was good enough for Jehovah, and so they offered the lame and the blind upon the altar. They considered the maintenance of the temple service too costly and irksome. By their example and teaching they caused the people to stumble, until all alike failed to render to Jehovah the reverence and honor due to his name. A similar unwillingness to pay the proper religious dues is reflected in 3. 7–10, where the prophet condemns the people for defrauding Jehovah by the withholding of tithes and offerings.

Mixed Marriages and Divorces. A second result of the spirit of indifference and skepticism was the dying down of the zeal for the maintenance of Israel's distinct and separate existence as the people of Jehovah. An evidence of this is seen in the wide prevalence of mixed marriages, that is, marriage alliances of Israelites with women of the surrounding heathen nations (2. 11, 12; compare Ezra 9. 1ff.; 10. 1ff.; Neh. 13. 23ff.). Such alliances would break down the barriers between the Jewish community and the heathen nations, and would open the door for the introduction of heathen practices and beliefs, which in the end might affect very seriously the purity of the Jehovah religion. In some cases these alliances seem to have been preceded by the putting away of a Jewish wife. This would

have been impossible had the Jews been fully conscious of the unique relation of their nation to Jehovah; but, with faith in Jehovah waning, they forgot the duties they owed to one another as members of the same covenant nation (2. 10), and lightly divorced their Jewish wives to make room for others. But even where divorce was not followed by an alliance with a foreign woman, the divorce itself implied a disregard of mutual obligations, and this in turn implied a waning faith in Jehovah.

The Moral Decline. The decline of religious fervor was followed by a moral decline. Sorcery, adultery, and false swearing were common; the laborer, the fatherless, and the widow were oppressed (3. 5; compare Neh. 5).

The Faithful Nucleus in the Community. It must not be thought, however, that none escaped the skepticism and the corruption that followed. The very appearance of Malachi shows that there were in the community those who retained their hold on God and whose faith was made only stronger by the trials through which they passed (3. 16). They had the same experiences and made the same observations as those who became skeptics and evildoers, but "instead of laying the blame on Jehovah . . . they recognized in Israel itself the cause of the disappointment. It was Israel's faithlessness and indifference that now as of old hindered the accomplishment of the prophetic visions. The one hope of their fulfillment lay in a more strenuous and loyal observance on Israel's part of the moral conditions of Jehovah's covenant." Out of this group of religious zealots arose Malachi, determined to arouse, if possible, a new enthusiasm and a new

faith in those who were rapidly drifting from Jehovah and his law.

THE MESSAGE OF MALACHI

The Book of Malachi falls naturally into three sections of unequal length, 1. 6—2. 9; 2. 10–16; 2. 17—4. 3, with a prologue, 1. 2–5, and an epilogue, 4. 4–6.

The Love of Jehovah for Israel, 1. 2–5. The prologue (1. 2–5) forms the basis of all subsequent appeals. The contemporaries of the prophet questioned the love of Jehovah, because the bright promises of the earlier prophets had remained unfulfilled. Malachi meets this criticism by pointing out the fatherly love of Jehovah for the Hebrews (2). They need not go far to find evidences of the divine love. Jacob and Esau were brothers, hence one would naturally expect their descendants to be treated alike by God; but what contrasts between the fortunes of the two!—Israel, after many ups and downs, restored to its old home, there to remain forever; the territory of Edom doomed to perpetual desolation. There can be but one reason for all this—Jehovah loved Jacob but hated Esau (3–5). This love of Jehovah for Israel, the prophet thinks, should be the motive and model for Israel's attitude toward him.

Faithlessness of Priests and People, 1. 6–14. The first denunciation (1. 6—2. 9) is directed principally, though not exclusively, against the priests. Throughout the entire history of Israel Jehovah showed himself a loving father and kind master; this would seem to entitle him to the people's gratitude and reverence, but they fail to give him his dues (6), as is clearly shown by the fact that they offer to Jehovah gifts which a human governor would reject with scorn

(7, 8). No wonder that Jehovah refuses to listen to their prayers (9). It would be far better to close the temple and extinguish the altar fires than to continue this sort of service (10). The service rendered to Jehovah among the nations is preferable to that of the Jews, for it is pure and generous, while that of the Jews is corrupt and heartless: the offerings are small, the sacrificial animals diseased and worthless, and the little they do give they give grudgingly (11–13). Cursed be every one who dares to insult Jehovah in this manner (14).

Warning Addressed to the Faithless Priests, 2. 1–9. If the priests do not heed the warning and render unto Jehovah the service acceptable to him he will send his curse upon them, that they may understand his purpose to maintain the ancient covenant with Levi (2. 1–4). According to this covenant Jehovah promised to Levi life and peace, while Levi promised to fear Jehovah. Both parties kept the covenant faithfully; Levi served God, and by his faithfulness turned many to righteousness (5, 6). Similar conduct is expected of all the priests (7), but how far short of the ideal do they come (8)! Therefore disgrace and contempt will be their portion (9).

Condemnation of Mixed Marriages and Divorces, 2. 10–16. In 2. 10–16 the prophet condemns the people's faithlessness to the ancient covenant with Jehovah as shown in the prevalence of mixed marriages and divorces. Jehovah is the father of all Israel, which implies that the individual Israelites are brothers and sisters, but they have disregarded the obligations placed upon them by these relations (10). To prove the accusation the prophet calls attention to two wide-

spread abuses: (1) mixed marriages, that is, marriages between Jews and women belonging to the surrounding heathenish or half-heathenish nations (11, 12); (2) the heartless putting away of Jewish wives by their husbands (13–15). Jehovah abominates such conduct, therefore they would better desist from it (16).

Indifference and Skepticism, 2. 17—4. 3. In 2. 17 the reader is introduced to the skeptics of the postexilic community, who had lost faith in Jehovah and his word because the sinful prospered while the good suffered. From these inequalities they concluded that Jehovah was taking no interest in the affairs of the nation, and they doubted that he would ever appear in judgment to right the wrongs (2. 17). To this complaint Jehovah replies that he will suddenly appear, preceded by a messenger who will prepare his way (3. 1). His coming will be terrible to all who have departed from the right, for he will come like a refiner's fire to burn up the dross (2). He will purify the priests that they may again offer sacrifice in righteousness (3, 4), and he will sweep away from the nation at large everything that is contrary to his will (5). Since the skeptics doubted the interest of Jehovah in the affairs of the nation, they saw no reason why they should continue to offer sacrifices to him. In 3. 6–12 the prophet condemns this neglect. First he asserts that the charge expressed in 2. 17 is groundless. Jehovah has not changed, but he cannot manifest himself as in days gone by, because their attitude toward him has undergone a change (6). They cry out for his return to them, but he can respond only if they return to him (7). When they inquire wherein they are to return, he replies, in being honest in the payment of

their tithes and offerings (8). If they do this they will soon discover that Jehovah still lives and can bless them with abundant prosperity (9–12).

In 3. 13 the prophet returns to the inequalities of life. The skeptics complain that the wicked prosper, while suffering is the portion of those who fear God (13–15). They are informed that their complaint is unwarranted, that Jehovah's eye is over all, and though at present the lot of the pious may seem hard, Jehovah keeps a record of those who are faithful, and when he appears in his temple he will make a distinction between the pious and the wicked (16–18). The wicked will be destroyed root and branch (4. 1), while the righteous will be exalted forever (2, 3). In this wise, the prophet argues, Jehovah will prove himself a God of judgment and of justice.

Exhortation to Obey the Law of Moses, 4. 4–6. The epilogue (4. 4–6) contains an exhortation and a promise. The hearers and readers are urged to lay to heart the law of Moses, for only thus can they hope to escape the terrors of the day of Jehovah (4). The promise of 3. 1 is repeated, that a messenger, here called Elijah, will come to prepare the way for the coming of Jehovah himself (5). The last verse (6) explains wherein the preparation consists: The messenger will attempt to convert the nation, so that the terror of the day of Jehovah may be averted.

THE TEACHING OF MALACHI

"Prophecy within the Law." The Book of Malachi has been aptly described as "Prophecy within the Law." On the one hand, it reaffirms the truths taught by the great preëxilic prophets, such as the fatherly

love and care of Jehovah for Israel, the holiness and righteousness of Jehovah, the terrible judgment upon the wicked, and the exaltation of the righteous. On the other hand, unlike the earlier prophetic books, it places great stress upon the law as a disciplinary rule of life; its lax performance receives severe condemnation, and the final exhortation of the book is, "Remember the law of Moses, my servant."

Malachi's High Regard for the Law. In fairness to Malachi this second characteristic must not be overemphasized to the obscuring of the former. True, he shared with the other religious leaders of the postexilic period a high regard for the law, but this is due not so much to lower religious conceptions as to the fact, which every careful student of Hebrew history in the days of Malachi must have noticed, that after all prophecy had failed to produce the permanent results for which the prophets had toiled so persistently. Generation after generation they had sought to create a pure and holy nation, but after the lapse of centuries the people appeared to be no nearer the ideal than at the beginning. Consequently the question must have arisen in many minds, whether the method of the prophets was the one best adapted to the needs of the time, whether the people could be trusted to apply the principles of the prophetic religion to the daily life, or whether it would not be better to lay down definite rules and urge the people to observe these, and thus avoid the lapses of the past? The last question was answered in the affirmative, and the legalism of the postexilic period was born. However, in the beginning it was permeated by a spirit of intense moral earnestness; the exaggeration of the letter

was a later development. Malachi was a prophet just as truly as were Isaiah and Jeremiah, but unlike these he emphasized the embodiment of the prophetic spirit and the prophetic principles in external law.

The Fatherhood of Jehovah. Though the principal points in Malachi's teaching have already been alluded to, a few of them deserve special mention: *The fatherhood of Jehovah.* Jehovah has manifested a fatherly interest in Israel throughout the entire history of the nation (1. 2–5). The prophet makes this fact the basis of all his appeals. Because he is the loving father of the Jews, he has a right to claim their reverence and affection (1. 6); because he loves all alike, they should show a brotherly love toward one another (2. 10). But his love can manifest itself only toward the good and pious; the unrighteous must perish.

The Righteousness of Jehovah. Malachi emphasizes the justice and righteousness of Jehovah as strongly as did the stern Amos. A righteous God demands of his worshipers a pure and righteous service. External forms of worship are an abomination to him unless they are prompted by true devotion and accompanied by a holy and consistent life (1. 6—2. 9). He would rather do without sacrifice and offerings than be compelled to receive them from those who neglect the weightier matters. He desires the payment of tithes, but only as the practical expression of a loving faith in him. Apparent inequalities in life do not militate against the divine righteousness, for in due time Jehovah will prove himself a righteous judge by rewarding all according to their deeds (3. 16—4. 3).

The Brotherhood of Man. The brotherhood of man

is taught in the Book of Malachi not in the broad New Testament sense, but only as applying to relations within the Jewish community. The individual Jews are related to one another as brothers and sisters, and this relation should determine their treatment of one another. Mixed marriages and divorce receive very severe condemnation, because they are sins against this principle of brotherhood; though undoubtedly the prophet was prompted also by the fear that these practices would corrupt the religion of Jehovah.

Jehovah Worship among Other Nations. The significance of 1. 11 has been overestimated. It would, indeed, be remarkable to find an Old Testament prophet broad-minded enough to teach that the worship of heathen nations offered to different deities was in reality worship of Jehovah under various forms. Though that is not the thought of the passage, the recognition that any worship rendered to Jehovah among the nations was acceptable to him was a long step forward toward the teaching of John 4. 21ff.

The Messianic Teaching of Malachi. The Messianic teaching of Malachi is very simple. The establishment of the kingdom of God will be preceded by the day of Jehovah, a day of sifting, on which Jehovah will appear to separate the righteous from the wicked, and a day of terror, on which he will execute judgment upon the wicked (3. 1–5; 3. 16—4. 3). After this crisis the pious will enter upon a life of permanent prosperity and felicity. The Messianic king is not mentioned; Jehovah himself will interfere on behalf of his people. Malachi introduces the person of a messenger, Elijah the prophet, who will be sent to prepare the way for the coming of the judge (3. 1).

CHAPTER XIII

JOEL

UNCERTAINTY OF THE DATE OF JOEL

Dates Proposed. Perhaps no other book in the Old Testament has been assigned to so many different dates as the Book of Joel. Even during the nineteenth century, when investigation is supposed to have proceeded on scientific principles, scholars have differed regarding its date by a space of more than five centuries. In other words, the book has been dated as early as the reign of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, that is, before 900 B. C., and as late as the fourth century B. C. In addition, it has been located in every century between these extreme dates.

External Evidence. The uncertainty as to the date of Joel is due to the absence of decisive data upon the basis of which definite conclusions may be reached. External evidence, the most satisfactory kind of evidence, is entirely lacking, unless we regard as external evidence the position of the book in the collection of Minor Prophets. But this is by no means conclusive, for it is generally recognized that, while in the main, perhaps, intended to be chronological, the arrangement of the Minor Prophets cannot be followed implicitly when a question of date is under consideration.

Internal Evidence. It is chiefly internal evidence, therefore, that must decide the question. Here belong any indications of the historical situation in which the book arose, the theological ideas expressed

or implied, literary parallels with other Old Testament writings whose dates are known, and linguistic and stylistic features. This evidence must be examined very carefully; but after this is done it will be found that the data presented by the book are, with a few exceptions, altogether indecisive. The exceptions, especially the historical references in 3. 1–5, which seem to presuppose the fall of Jerusalem in 586 and the subsequent dispersion of the Jews, the constant emphasis on the more external elements of religion, and some of the linguistic peculiarities, favor a post-exilic date. To determine the exact date during this period may not be possible, though a date subsequent to the final establishment of the law under Nehemiah (444–432 B. C.), perhaps about 400 B. C., seems the most probable.

THE MESSAGE OF JOEL

The Prophet Joel. Of the personal history of Joel nothing is known beyond what may be gathered from the prophecy itself. His message centers around Judah and Jerusalem; and the manner in which he refers in several places to the land and the city makes it probable that his home was in southern Palestine, perhaps in Jerusalem. He displays intimate knowledge of the temple and its service, of the priests and their duties, but he himself was probably not a priest.

Occasion of Joel's Utterances. The occasion of Joel's utterances seems to have been a threefold calamity, locusts (1. 4), drought (1. 16–18), and conflagrations (1. 19, 20). But his horizon was not limited by this; on the contrary, his chief interest centers in a manifestation of Jehovah still in the future, yet in the prophetic conception, near at hand,

the day of Jehovah; and throughout the entire book this day is kept prominently before the readers.

Description of the Plague of Locusts, 1. 1–20. The Book of Joel falls naturally into two parts. In the first (1. 1—2. 17) judgment receives special emphasis; in the second (2. 18—3. 21) the thought of restoration and blessing predominates. The first section of the first part (1. 1–20) deals mainly with the distress that arouses the prophet's emotions. He begins by calling attention to the present calamity, which is without parallel in the memory of even the oldest inhabitants. The whole country is waste and desolate (1. 2–4). The awful distress leads him to call upon all to lament (5–12), because all luxuries are cut off (5–7); the worship of Jehovah has suffered through the interruption, or threatened interruption, of the meal and drink offerings (8–10), and the means for the sustenance of life are cut off and destroyed by the locusts (11, 12). But the present calamity is only the beginning of the great final blow, the judgment of the day of Jehovah. Is there, then, no escape? Jehovah alone can save, but communion with him is at an end, or is at least threatened. If, however, he is approached rightly he may yet have mercy (13, 14). The prophet is so earnest in his appeal because he sees looming up in the near future the day of Jehovah as destruction from the Almighty (15). In justification of his fear the prophet calls attention once more to the awful condition of the land, and closes with a petition to Jehovah for mercy and deliverance (16–20).

The Plague of Locusts the Harbinger of the Day of Jehovah, 2. 1–17. The second section (2. 1–17) presents the thought of chapter 1 from a somewhat

different viewpoint. The prophet, starting again from the present unparalleled calamity, looks upon it chiefly as the harbinger of the day of Jehovah, which is near at hand (2. 1–3). In the succeeding verses he presents a vivid word picture of the plague of locusts. The appearance is "as the appearance of horses. . . . Like the noise of chariots on the tops of the mountains do they leap. . . . At their presence the peoples are in anguish. . . . They run like mighty men; they climb the wall like men of war. . . . They leap upon the city; they run upon the wall; they climb up into the houses; they enter in at the windows like a thief" (4–11). This scourge introduces the terrible day itself. Though near at hand, it may still be averted; and once more he summons all to repentance (12–17).

Restoration of the Divine Favor; Destruction of the Nations, Exaltation of the Jews, 2. 18—3. 21. Though not expressly stated, it is implied that the prophet's exhortation was heeded; the solemn assembly was held, and the people turned to Jehovah in penitence, whereupon he altered his purpose (18). In verse 19 Jehovah is introduced as replying to the petitions of the penitent people. He will remove the plague of locusts and restore abundant temporal prosperity (20–26). But the temporal blessings will be far surpassed by wonderful spiritual gifts, the presence of Jehovah in the midst of his people (27) and the outpouring of the Divine Spirit upon all flesh (28, 29). Although temporarily postponed, the day of Jehovah will finally come, inaugurated by wonders in the heavens and on the earth. Its terrors, however, will not fall upon the penitent Jews (30–32), but upon the nations that have cruelly wronged the "heritage of

Jehovah" (3. 1–3). Of the doomed nations Tyre, Sidon, and the Philistines are singled out on account of special hostility to Judah (4–8). The nations are challenged to muster their forces, only to be annihilated in the "valley of decision." The day of judgment upon the nations will be one of triumph for Israel (9–16). The crisis passed, Jerusalem will be holy, and the whole land will be blessed with extraordinary fertility, while Edom and Egypt will lie waste forever (17–21).

THE TEACHING OF JOEL

The Day of Jehovah. The teaching of Joel centers around the day of Jehovah, that is, the great future crisis in which Jehovah will manifest his power and majesty in the destruction of his enemies and the deliverance of those who trust in him. Concerning this day he teaches: (1) Its approach is marked by great convulsions and extraordinary phenomena in the sphere of nature (2. 11, 30; compare also his interpretation of the plague of locusts). (2) The character of the day will depend upon the attitude of heart and life toward Jehovah. If the people continue in rebellion, it will be a day of terror (1. 15; 2. 11), but if they repent it will be a day of blessing and exaltation (2. 12–14, 19–29). (3) When the day finally breaks, those who call upon the name of Jehovah will be delivered (2. 31), but the enemies of Israel, and as such of Jehovah, will be annihilated (chapter 3).

The Outpouring of the Divine Spirit. Joel emphasizes the outpouring of the Divine Spirit. Other prophets announce that in the era of restoration the Spirit of Jehovah will do an important work, but nowhere else do we find a promise so comprehensive,

the fulfillment of which would mean the realization of the wish of Moses, "Would that all Jehovah's people were prophets, that Jehovah would put his Spirit upon them!" (Num. 11. 29.) The day of Pentecost marked the beginning of the fulfillment; and since then it has been and is being fulfilled with ever-increasing fullness, and in a manner far superior to the expectation of our prophet.

Joel's Exclusiveness. Joel seems to have a narrower view of Jehovah's redemptive purpose than some of the other prophets. Apparently he sees no salvation for the nations. Israel is to be saved and glorified, the nations are to be judged and destroyed. Even the promise concerning the outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh is seen, on closer study, to be limited to the descendants of Abraham. The promise is to "*your* sons and *your* daughters, . . . *your* old men, . . . *your* young men."

But it would not be proper to condemn the prophet for this seeming exclusiveness. It was this very limitation during the generations following the return from exile that made possible the existence of the religion of Jehovah in unadulterated form. That Israel remained Israel in spite of the attempts of the Samaritans and other surrounding nations, in spite of the influence of the Persians, "in spite of the Greek arms and the Greek mind, was due to the legalism of Ezra and Nehemiah, and to what we may call the narrow enthusiasm of Joel." That a later generation failed to see that the crisis was passed, that it was time to "go into all the world" and spread the knowledge of Jehovah to "every creature"; that an illegitimate exaggeration and a false interpretation of the

utterances of men of God, like our prophet, was responsible for the rejection by the Jews of the Messiah when he actually appeared among men, surely cannot be made a basis of accusation against our prophet.

Jehovah's Sovereignty. Joel is silent concerning the person of the Messianic king. In the final crisis it is Jehovah himself who interferes, both in judging the nations and in delivering the faithful Jews. It is he who in his own person will rule on Zion: "I am in the midst of Israel" (2. 27; compare 3. 17, 21).

Joel's Attitude toward the Externals of Religion. On account of his emphasis of the externals of religion (1. 9, 13, 14; 2. 12–17) Joel has sometimes been accused of neglecting entirely the weightier matters. Here, as in all things, we must guard against extremes. That his attitude toward sacrifice is not that of Amos 5. 21ff. or Isa. 1. 11ff., may be readily admitted, but that he entirely lacked interest in the fulfillment of moral requirements is not true. For he promises deliverance to the people not on the basis of painstaking observance of the forms of religion, but only on the basis of a "godly sorrow that worketh repentance for salvation" (compare especially 2. 12, 13).

CHAPTER XIV

JONAH AND DANIEL

The Books of Jonah and Daniel are not prophetic books in the same sense as the books considered in the preceding chapters. The latter is not reckoned among the prophetic books in the Jewish canon, and the former, though one of the Minor Prophets, is called, even in Jewish tradition, a book by itself. However, since the English Old Testament places both among the prophetic books, they must be considered, at least briefly, in a book on Hebrew prophecy intended for the student of the English Bible. Both books raise numerous questions the discussion of which lies outside the scope of this work. Anyone interested in these questions—and they are not without importance for an adequate appreciation of the books—may find a full discussion of the critical questions raised by the Book of Jonah in the author's Commentary on the Minor Prophets; the Book of Daniel receives adequate treatment in C. M. Cobern's Commentary on Ezekiel and Daniel (in the Whedon series), and in S. R. Driver's Commentary on Daniel (in the Cambridge Bible series).

JONAH

CONTENTS OF THE BOOK OF JONAH

The Hero of the Book of Jonah. The Book of Jonah centers around Jonah, the son of Amittai (1. 1). A prophet bearing the same name is mentioned in 2 Kings 14. 25, and since the two names are found nowhere else in the Old Testament it is exceedingly

probable that the Jonah of 2 Kings 14. 25 and the hero of this little book are identical.

Jonah's Commission, Disobedience, Punishment, 1. 1–16. The Book of Jonah narrates certain incidents connected with Jonah's commission to preach in Nineveh. The narrative opens with an account of Jonah's commission (1. 1, 2). Unwilling to obey, he decided to flee "from the presence of Jehovah"; he went to Joppa and embarked for Tarshish in Spain (3). Soon a great tempest arose, which threatened to destroy the ship (4). The terrified sailors attempted to save the vessel, but the danger only increased. Meanwhile Jonah was asleep. Finally he was aroused by the captain, who implored him to pray to his God for help. He did so, but no relief came (5, 6). Then the sailors, convinced that the storm was due to the anger of a deity against some one on board, decided to cast the lot for the purpose of discovering the guilty one. It fell upon Jonah, who then made a confession, and urged them to cast him overboard (7–12). At first they hesitated, but finally they cast him out, and immediately the storm ceased (13–15). As a result the men recognized that the God of Jonah was the true God, and they offered sacrifice to him (16).

Jonah's Prayer and Deliverance, 1. 17—2. 10. Jonah did not perish, for a big fish swallowed him, in whose belly he remained for three days (1. 17). At the end of that period he was cast forth upon the dry land (2. 10). While in the fish's belly he offered a prayer consisting of thanksgiving for deliverance wrought and a promise to remain forever loyal to his God, because he alone can save (2. 1–9).

Jonah's Preaching in Nineveh and its Effects,

Chapter 3. After Jonah's deliverance from this peril Jehovah again commanded him to go to Nineveh; and this time the prophet obeyed the call. When he had found a suitable place he delivered the message, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (3. 1–4). The effect of the preaching was immediate; king and people gave evidence of sincere repentance; whereupon Jehovah determined to withhold the judgment (5–10).

Jonah's Complaint and Rebuke by Jehovah, Chapter 4. This displeased Jonah, and he complained bitterly because Jehovah showed mercy to the Ninevites; and finally he prayed that Jehovah might take his life (4. 1–3). Jehovah rebuked him gently, and afterward taught him by the miraculous growth and destruction of the "gourd" the absurdity of his complaint and the justice of the divine mercy (4–11).

THE TEACHING OF THE BOOK OF JONAH

Peculiarity of the Book of Jonah. The contents as just outlined show the difference between the Book of Jonah and the other books called prophetic by the Jews. All the others record chiefly prophetic utterances, though sometimes embodying brief narratives of events; the Book of Jonah, on the other hand, records a prophet's work and experiences, giving little space to his utterances.

Purpose and Aim of the Book. A book of this character would seem to find its most natural place in the third division of the Jewish canon, among the Writings; so that its present position rather favors the conclusion reached by the majority of modern scholars upon the basis of a study of numerous facts presented by the book itself, that the book—whatever

historical material it may embody—is primarily not historical but prophetic. In other words, it was not written to give information concerning the prophet Jonah, but, as the product of a prophetic mind, for the purpose of teaching a great prophetic truth. This didactic purpose must be kept in mind in any attempt to interpret the book and its teaching.

The Central Truth Taught in the Book. What, then, is the chief lesson of the Book of Jonah? Certainly it is possible to point out several truths taught and emphasized; nevertheless, there is one central truth that "runs like a red thread through the whole and at last becomes a knot whose unloosing in 4. 10, 11 forms the glorious finale." This truth is the universality of the divine plan of redemption. Nowhere else in the Old Testament is such continued stress laid upon the fatherhood of God, embracing in its infinite love the whole human race. The Book of Jonah is indeed a "missionary book," teaching that God does not wish that "any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Some of the postexilic writings of the Old Testament indicate that there was growing among the Jews a narrow, exclusive tendency, which produced the idea that salvation was *for* the Jews only, an idea against which early Christianity had to battle with all her might. To counteract this spirit of exclusiveness is the aim of the Book of Jonah; to show that the belief that Jehovah would save only the Jews and destroy all other nations was an unwarranted assumption. "The national limits of the old covenant are here wondrously broken through; the entire heathen world opens as a mission field to the messengers of Jehovah. Thus the book, with its wide-hearted out-

look on God's ways, and the sharp criticism of the selfish spirit of the Jewish people, as a didactic work, is itself a miracle in the literature of this people." No one but a prophet, filled with the Spirit of Jehovah, could have written this, the most Christian of all Old Testament books.

Details of Allegorical Interpretation. This great lesson is taught in the form of a parable or allegory, of which Jonah is the central figure. According to one view, which is held by many, Jonah symbolizes the nation Israel. Israel had received a divine commission to make known Jehovah to all the earth (Isa. 42. 5–9; Gen. 12. 3; compare Jonah 1. 1, 2); but Israel was disobedient and failed to carry out the divine purpose (Isa. 42. 19–24; compare Jonah 1. 3, 4), and in consequence was swallowed up by the "monster" (Jer. 51. 34; compare Jonah 1. 17). In exile Israel turned to Jehovah (that the exile would have this effect is stated again and again in the prophetic writings; compare Jonah 2. 1ff.); then Israel was delivered from the "monster" (Jer. 51. 44; Ezra 1. 1ff.; compare Jonah 2. 10). The duration of Israel's judgment is represented by Hosea as lasting three days (Hos. 6. 2; compare Jonah 1. 17).

While the exile brought the Israelites, in some measure, to their senses, they were not entirely cured. Their mission was not revoked; it remained their duty to carry the knowledge of Jehovah to the ends of the earth. But Israel remained silent. There were many who were thinking of the nations as doomed; they were displeased because the threats of the preëxilic prophets remained unfulfilled. To teach such the wickedness of their attitude is the aim of chapters 3 and 4.

This may be the correct view. On the other hand, there are those who believe that the author has in mind only the unspiritual Israelites of the postexilic period, and that the purpose of the book is to convince these of the iniquity of their selfish exclusiveness, and to give them a more adequate vision of the divine purpose. In this case Jonah would represent not the whole nation, but only the unspiritual portion of the postexilic community. But whatever the difference of opinion concerning the interpretation of certain details, the chief lesson of the book remains the same, and gives to it a unique and sublime place among the writings of the Old Testament.

Date of the Book of Jonah. If the preceding paragraphs interpret correctly the teaching of the book, its origin during the period after the exile becomes very probable. This conclusion is supported by the internal evidence presented by the book itself. To fix the exact point of time during that period is more difficult. However, the character of its teaching makes it probable that it was written not earlier than the reforms under Ezra and Nehemiah, which were to some extent responsible for the rise of the spirit of exclusiveness condemned in the book. On the other hand, it cannot be later than 200 B. C., when the prophetic canon was completed. Hence we may conclude that the book originated some time between 400 and 250 B. C.

DANIEL

THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Place of the Book of Daniel among the Writings. According to the common grouping of the books in the English Old Testament the Book of Daniel is the

last of the socalled Major Prophets. The Jews, however, place the book in the third division of their canon, among the Writings. If the book was written, as is now quite generally thought, during the Maccabean troubles, subsequent to 170 B. C., this fact in itself would be a sufficient explanation of its position among the Writings, for the prophetic canon was undoubtedly completed by 200 B. C. Those who believe that the book originated during the period of exile account for this position in various ways. Some hold that it is due simply to an error of the early Jews; others, that the apocalyptic character of the book prevented it from taking rank among the prophets; still others insist that at one time it was one of the prophets, but that subsequently to the opening of the Christian era the learned rabbis, prompted in part by their attitude toward Jesus, "degraded Daniel from the prophetic rank and put his book into the Hagiographa."

Chief Characteristics of Jewish Apocalyptic Literature. The Book of Daniel belongs to the apocalyptic literature. Apocalyptic elements are found also in other Old Testament writings, notably in Ezekiel and Zechariah, but Daniel is the principal representative of this kind of literature in the Old Testament, and has exercised a very marked influence upon subsequent writings both Jewish and Christian. The apocalyptic literature may be regarded as the latest form of prophetic writing among the Hebrews. Like the prophet, the apocalyptic writer seeks to set forth the character, will, and purpose of God, as also the nature and laws of his kingdom. But there is a vast difference between the two in their attitude toward their own day and generation. Says R. H. Charles,

one of the chief authorities among English-speaking scholars on apocalyptic literature: "Prophecy still believes that this world is God's world, and that in this world his goodness and truth will yet be justified. Hence the prophet addresses himself chiefly to the present and its concerns, and when he addresses himself to the future, his prophecy springs naturally from the present, and the future which he depicts is regarded as in organic connection with it. The apocalyptic writer, on the other hand, almost wholly despairs of the present; his main interests are supramundane." As a result the apocalyptic literature dwells more especially upon the triumph of the kingdom of God in the coming age. Hence its name, "apocalyptic," that is, the literature that "makes known what is hidden" from the eyes of common men. Closely connected with this hope of the ultimate triumph of God are two other thoughts, that are made very prominent in Jewish apocalyptic writings, namely, (1) the idea of a world judgment, which will mark the downfall of evil and the exaltation of right, and (2) the hope of a resurrection from the dead, so that even those who have departed may receive their proper dues.

Authorship and Date of the Book of Daniel. The ancient Jewish opinion and the prevailing Christian view until quite recent times was that Daniel, who lived in exile during the sixth century B. C., was the author of the whole book. The first to attack the authorship of Daniel was the Neo-Platonist Porphyry, who died in 303 A. D., but he had no followers among Christians. After the period of the Reformation questions were again raised, and since the last quarter of the eighteenth century an ever-increasing number of

scholars have questioned the authorship of Daniel, until it may be said that the old view has been quite generally abandoned, even by evangelical scholars. Its place has been taken by a variety of views, which, however, all agree in this, that the book in its present form originated in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes (175–163 B. C.); in other words, that it is the outgrowth of the Maccabean troubles, and was intended to comfort and inspire the oppressed Jewish believers in that age. A discussion of this problem is outside the scope of this chapter; besides, lack of space makes it impossible, as will be realized when it is seen that Professor Keil, for example, after bringing forward the evidence in favor of the genuineness of the Book of Daniel under six heads, discusses the objections to the genuineness under twenty-seven heads. Keil's Introduction to the Old Testament gives a good idea of the arguments in favor of Daniel's authorship; the commentaries of Driver and of Cobern, to which reference has been made, contain admirable discussions of the problem from the modern viewpoint.

Pseudonymous Authorship a Mark of Apocalyptic Literature. If the book is an apocalypse, the absence of the name of the author and the ascription to a prominent person in Jewish history would be quite natural, for pseudonymous authorship is one of the characteristic marks of apocalyptic literature, as may be seen from the following titles of apocalyptic writings, all of which were written subsequent to 200 B. C.: Apocalypse of Baruch, Book of Enoch, Ascension of Isaiah, Assumption of Moses, Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, Psalms of Solomon. In an apocalypse it is customary for the author to place "in the mouth

of some ancient worthy a history of events up to the author's own time, followed by a description of God's judgment on the wicked and deliverance of his people."

CONTENTS OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL

The Book of Daniel falls naturally into two parts: chapters 1–6, which narrate the history of Daniel, and chapters 7–12, which contain an account of the visions of Daniel.

Daniel's Youth and Education, Chapter 1. Chapter 1 describes Daniel's youth and education. In the third year of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, Daniel and other Jewish children were carried captive to Babylonia (1. 1–3). At the command of Nebuchadnezzar he and three others were educated for three years in all the wisdom of the Chaldeans. During the entire period they carefully refrained from eating or drinking anything forbidden by their law (4–17). At the end of the three years the king found their wisdom and understanding ten times greater than that of all the magicians and enchanters in his realm. Concerning Daniel the specific statement is made that he had understanding in all visions and dreams (18–21).

The Dream of the Image and its Significance, Chapter 2. Daniel's powers are soon put to a test. In the second year of his reign Nebuchadnezzar had a dream which sorely troubled him (2. 1). The wise men of Babylon were appealed to, but they were unable to recall or interpret the dream. This made the king angry, and he ordered all of them to be slain (2–13). Daniel intercedes for them (14–16), and the secret being revealed to him in a night vision (17–24), he recalls to the king his dream: The king

had seen in his dream a great and terrible image. Its head was of fine gold, its breast and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of brass, its legs of iron, and its feet part of iron and part of clay. While watching the image, the king saw a stone that was cut out without hands smite the feet of the image, which was broken to pieces, but the stone became a great mountain and filled the whole earth (25–35). This image, Daniel interprets, represents by its different parts successive world powers, beginning with Nebuchadnezzar, while the stone represents the kingdom of God, which will destroy all the others and, embracing the whole earth in its sway, will abide forever (36–45). When Nebuchadnezzar hears the interpretation he acknowledges the greatness of the God of the Hebrews, and in gratitude he exalts Daniel to the position of chief governor over all the wise men of Babylon. His companions also are greatly honored (46–49).

Faithfulness of Daniel's Companions and their Deliverance from the Fiery Furnace, Chapter 3. Chapter 3 records how the faithfulness of Daniel's companions was tested: Nebuchadnezzar erects a colossal image of gold. For its dedication he summons the nobles from his whole realm, and issues orders that at a given signal all must fall down and worship the golden image. Those who fail to do this are threatened with death in a fiery furnace (3. 1–7). The king is informed that the companions of Daniel did not obey his command (8–12), whereupon they are cast into the fiery furnace (13–23). To the king's astonishment the flames do not harm them, and they are brought forth (24–27). The king again acknowledges their God as supreme and issues a decree threatening death to any-

one who might dare to speak anything amiss against him. The three Jews receive greater honors than before (28–30).

Nebuchadnezzar's Tree-dream and its Fulfillment, Chapter 4. Nebuchadnezzar issues a decree to all his subjects, setting forth the wisdom and power of the God of the Hebrews (4. 1–3). The king had a dream which disturbed him; he related it to his wise men, but they could not interpret it (4–7). At last Daniel came in, and Nebuchadnezzar related the dream to him: He saw in a dream a mighty tree that reached to heaven, and whose branches sheltered the birds of the heavens and the beasts of the field. Suddenly he heard the command to cut down the tree; only the stump of the roots is to be left, and its portion is to be with the beasts of the field for seven years (8–18). Daniel interpreted this dream as follows: The tree represents the king in his greatness, but Jehovah has decreed to bring him low; his reason will leave him for seven years, which time he will spend among the beasts of the field, until he has learned to acknowledge the sway of Jehovah. Afterward he will be restored (19–27). All came to pass as Daniel had predicted; and now, in gratitude for his recovery, Nebuchadnezzar issues the decree (28–37).

The Feast of Belshazzar and the Handwriting on the Wall, Chapter 5. Belshazzar, the king, made a great feast for his nobles, during which they drank wine from the vessels which formerly belonged to the temple of Jehovah (5. 1–4). Suddenly the king sees the fingers of a man's hand writing something upon the wall; the wise men are summoned but fail to interpret it (5–9). At the suggestion of the queen Daniel

is called (10–12), who reads the words, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin" (13–25), and interprets them as meaning that the kingdom of Belshazzar is about to be given to the Medes and Persians (26–28). Daniel receives further honors (29), Belshazzar is slain the same night (30), and is succeeded by Darius the Mede (31).

Daniel's Fidelity and his Deliverance from the Lions' Den, Chapter 6. Darius continues Daniel in a position of high honor (6. 1–3). This displeases the presidents and satraps of the provinces of Persia, who plot against his life (4, 5). They induce Darius to issue a decree forbidding any man to ask a petition of any god or man except the king for thirty days (6–8). Daniel is caught violating the decree and is cast into the lions' den (9–17). He is, however, miraculously delivered (18–23), and his accusers are cast to the lions (24); whereupon Darius issues a decree exalting the God of Daniel, and the latter continues to prosper (25–28).

The Vision of the Four Beasts and its Interpretation, Chapter 7. With 7. 1 begins the second division of the Book of Daniel, containing chiefly accounts of Daniel's visions and their interpretations. The first vision recorded came to him in the first year of Belshazzar. He saw four great beasts coming up out of the sea: a lion with the wings of an eagle, a bear, a leopard with four wings and four heads, and a fourth unnamed beast with powerful iron teeth and ten horns. Among the latter another horn sprang up, before which three of the ten were plucked up (1–8). He also beheld a judgment scene in heaven; the "one that was ancient of days" sat upon the judgment

throne; the proud horn was slain, and the doom of the beasts was decreed (9–12); whereupon the ancient of days gave dominion over all the world to "one like unto a son of man" (13, 14). A heavenly interpreter explains the meaning of the vision to Daniel: The four beasts signify four kingdoms, all of which are doomed. After the destruction of the fourth "the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever and ever" (15–28).

The Ram and the He-goat, Chapter 8. A second vision—the ram and the he-goat—came to Daniel in the third year of Belshazzar. He saw a powerful ram with two high horns throwing down everything before it (8. 1–4), until a he-goat with a notable horn between his eyes, coming from the west, smote the ram and broke his two horns (5–7). After a time the one horn was broken, and its place taken by four others, out of one of which came forth a little horn, which grew very powerful and stopped even the daily sacrifice and destroyed the sanctuary of the "prince of the host." He also heard a voice announcing how long the sway of the little horn and the desecration of the sanctuary would continue (8–14). The angel Gabriel interprets the vision to Daniel (15–19): The ram represents the Medo-Persian empire (20), the he-goat the kingdom of Greece, and the great horn between his eyes the first king (21); the four horns represent four kingdoms into which the kingdom of Greece is to be divided (22); the little horn is a king of fierce countenance, who will exalt himself even against the "prince of princes"; but in the end he will be brought low (23–27).

Daniel's Prayer and the Divine Answer, Chapter 9. In the first year of Darius Daniel understood

"by the books" that the seventy years of desolation foretold by Jeremiah were drawing to a close (9. 1, 2). He therefore makes confession of the people's sins and implores Jehovah to speedily restore the divine favor (3–19). While he prays the angel Gabriel appears and explains to him that the seventy years mean really seventy weeks of years, before the kingdom of God can ultimately triumph (20–24). The seventy weeks are divided into three smaller periods, seven weeks from the going forth of the command to rebuild Jerusalem to "the anointed one, the prince"; then sixty-two weeks during which the holy city will exist. At the end of this period the anointed one shall be cut off, and "the people of the prince that shall come" shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. During one half of the remaining week sacrifice and oblation will cease, but after that the power of the desolator will be broken (25–27).

The Ultimate Triumph of the Kingdom of God, Chapters 10–12. Chapters 10–12 record a vision of Daniel in the third year of Cyrus, by the river Tigris. At the conclusion of twenty-one days of fasting and mourning a heavenly messenger appears to him (10. 1–12). He tells Daniel that he would have come sooner, but "the prince of the kingdom of Persia" withstood him. Through the assistance of Michael, "one of the chief princes," he has at last arrived, to make known to him what will befall his people in the latter days (13, 14). When Daniel has recovered from his first terror (15–19) the messenger informs him that he and Michael, the prince of the Jews, will have to fight in the Jews' behalf, first with the prince of Persia, then with the prince of Greece (10. 20—11. 1). Persia,

after the rule of four kings, will be overthrown by a powerful king of Greece, whose kingdom will be divided after his death (2–4). The alliances and conflicts between the kings of the south (Egypt) and the kings of the north (Syria) during the succeeding generations are portrayed in verses 5–20. Finally "a contemptible person" will ascend the throne of the northern kingdom; he will exalt himself greatly, carry on cruel wars against many nations, and oppress even the people of the most high God; yet he shall come to his end and none shall help him (21–45). The death of the oppressor will be followed by the deliverance of the Jews, the resurrection of many, and the exaltation of the faithful (12. 1–3). The message of the vision is to encourage those who live in the time of the end, that is, during the final struggles preceding the ultimate triumph of God and of his saints (4). When that will come is explained to Daniel in verses 5–13.

THE TEACHING OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Design and Purpose of the Book of Daniel. A recent conservative writer, who believes that Daniel wrote the book, sets forth its design and purpose in these words: "It is neither prophetic nor historic. It is designed rather to show how God cares for his people even when everything seems against them, with their temple destroyed, their nation scattered, and the severe burdens of slavery resting upon the nation." With this statement would agree also those who believe that the book in its present form comes from a later date. It is seen, therefore, that the essential teaching of the book remains unaltered and its permanent value unaffected by any special view concerning its date and

authorship. The testimony of Professor Terry, given after a study of the Book of Daniel during a period of more than thirty years, is worthy of consideration. Speaking of himself in the third person, he says: "He has found few portions of the Holy Scriptures more profitable for devout study, and he here repeats what he has published elsewhere, and uttered time and again, that whatever may be the results of scientific criticism touching the date and authorship of the book, the apocalyptic chapters constitute a most original and important body of divine revelation. Whether written during the exile or in the time of the Maccabees, they contain a picture of the kingdoms of the world and their ultimate subjection to the kingdom of God, worthy of rank with any prophecies to be found in the Hebrew Scriptures. Nowhere else do we find before the advent of Christ such a magnificent conception of the kingdom of heaven. The issues of modern criticisms, however, are not over these facts, but over questions of the date of the composition, the methods of interpretation, and the literary character of the book as one of the 'divers portions' of God's old-time revelations."

The Ultimate Triumph of the Kingdom of God. The principal idea, then, of the book is the ultimate triumph of the kingdom of God. "It tells," says Beardslee, "in plainer language than had been used before, of the subjection of the world to God, and indicates clearly the evidence of the divine rule, and assures us that the progress of God's kingdom is absolutely irresistible and that all things will be ultimately brought into submission to God."

Earlier prophets looked with equal assurance for the

establishment of the kingdom of God, when the divine will and purpose would be realized in every detail of life; and, like these prophets, the author of the Book of Daniel expected that the reign of righteousness would begin immediately after the great crisis of his own day and generation would be over. The description of the kingdom in the book differs, however, in some respects from that of earlier writers, as is quite natural in view of the apocalyptic character of the whole book. The kingdom of God for which the earlier prophets looked was an earthly kingdom, "little more than a continuance of the existing state of society, only purged by a judgment from sin, and freed from trouble." The Book of Daniel marks a transition from this conception to the conception of a heavenly kingdom of God, which appears even more prominently in later apocalyptic and New Testament writings.

Two other points in the teaching of the book may be considered:

Angels in the Book of Daniel. From the time of Zechariah angels become more and more prominent in the thought of Judaism. The teaching of the Book of Daniel concerning angels marks an advance over earlier teaching along three lines: (1) The doctrine of guardian or patron angels, determining the destinies of separate nations, appears here for the first time in definite form. The angels of Persia, Greece, and Judah are mentioned in Dan. 10. 13, 20, 21; 12. 1. (2) For the first time names are given to angels. The guardian angel of the Jews is Michael (10. 13, 21; 12. 1), who fights for them against the guardian angels of their enemies, and Gabriel appears as a heaven-sent interpreter (8. 16; 9. 21). (3) Distinction in rank

among angels also appears first in Daniel. Michael is called "the great prince" (12. 1), and "one of the chief princes" (10. 13). The latter expression would seem to refer to a group of superior angels, to whom at a later time the name archangels is given (compare Jude 9). In some of the later Jewish writings four such angels are mentioned, in others seven. The seven angels that stand before God appear also in Rev. 8. 2.

The Hope of a Resurrection. Resurrection is the other element in the teaching of Daniel demanding attention. Dan. 12. 2 reads, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." This passage contains the most definite reference to resurrection found in the Old Testament. The general Old Testament conception of a life or existence after death is rather hazy and, on the whole, gloomy and full of despair. The dead are represented as gathering in Sheol, where they live a "shadowy, half-conscious, joyless existence, not worthy of the name of life, where communion with God was at an end, and where God's mercies could be neither apprehended nor acknowledged." But here and there rays of light appear. Sometimes the hope is expressed that God will deliver his saints from death; at other times, that they will be raised from the dead. To the latter class belongs the passage quoted. But even in this, perhaps the latest expression of the hope of a resurrection in the Old Testament, the doctrine of the resurrection remains incomplete. The Christian still needs the fuller light cast upon the subject by Jesus himself. What the passage in Daniel adds to the earlier teaching is: (1) the resurrection of the wicked,

which is clearly taught here for the first time; (2) the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, though the nature of these rewards and punishments is left indefinite. There are, however, still certain limitations. In the first place, the context makes it doubtful that the author meant to include non-Israelites in the promise of a resurrection. Throughout the book he is concerned with the deliverance and exaltation of the oppressed Jews; hence it would seem most natural to interpret the references in chapter 12 also as applying to the Jews. Moreover, the expression "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake" would seem to imply that not even all Israelites will be raised from the dead. As is suggested by several commentators, the writer may have in mind only "those individuals who had in an extraordinary degree helped or hindered the advent of God's kingdom, that is, the Jewish martyrs and apostates respectively; the great majority of the nation, who were of average character, neither overmuch righteous nor overmuch wicked, remaining still in Sheol."

The Prophets a Preparation for the Advent of Jesus the Christ. This limitation in the prophetic conception is only one of several which the student of Hebrew prophecy discovers; and these shortcomings are only what we might expect. Even the first great apologist of Christianity, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, recognizes the incompleteness of the Old Testament dispensation, which had to be supplemented and perfected by a new and more glorious manifestation of God; hence, "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days

spoken unto us in a Son." Therefore, while the prophetic books which we have studied are unquestionably "able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus," and are "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work," it must never be forgotten that these writings mark a preparatory stage, and that the full revelation of God came in and through Jesus the Christ, the record of which revelation is found in the New Testament writings.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

CHAPTER I

1. What is the Bible?
2. Explain the etymology of the word "Bible."
3. How many books are there in the Bible? How many in the Old Testament? How many in the New?
4. Name in order the books of the English Old Testament.
5. How are these books grouped? Name the books belonging to each group.
6. State the differences between the English Old Testament and the Hebrew Bible, and explain their origin.
7. How many books are there in the Hebrew Bible? How are they grouped?
8. Mark the three stages in the formation of the Old Testament canon.
9. Explain the phrase "in divers portions."
10. What is the meaning of "in divers manners"?
11. Indicate some methods by which God makes himself known.
12. Name four classes of religious workers who during the Old Testament period aided God in his attempts to reach man.
13. Describe the activity of the prophets and the origin of the prophetic literature.
14. Describe the activity of the wise men and the origin of the wisdom literature.
15. Describe the origin of the devotional literature.
16. Describe the activity of the priests and the origin of the legal or priestly literature.
17. Describe the activity of the prophets and priests as historians, and the origin of the historical literature.

CHAPTER II

1. Where is the ultimate basis of prophecy to be found?
2. State four universal religious beliefs underlying the phenomenon of prophecy.

3. Describe the "passive" external method of determining the will of the Deity.
4. Describe some of the efforts put forth for the purpose of determining the will of the Deity.
5. Describe the internal method of divine revelation as illustrated, for example, at Delphi.
6. State three important differences between prophecy in Israel and "prophecy" outside of Israel.
7. What is the meaning of the term "prophet" as used in the Old Testament?
8. State and explain three names given to the prophets by their contemporaries.
9. Discuss the comprehensiveness of the prophetic activity.
10. When did prophecy originate in Israel?
11. Describe the prophetic activity of Moses.
12. What prophets appeared during the period of the Judges?
13. Who are the "sons of the p ophets"?
14. Why does Samuel deserve to be called a prophet?
15. Describe the prophetic activity during the reigns of David and Solomon, and in connection with the division of the kingdom.
16. Describe two classes of false prophets.
17. What danger threatened Jehovah religion during the reign of Ahab and Jezebel?
18. What was the principal result of the activity of Elijah and Elisha?
19. Name, with dates, the eighth century prophets.
20. Name, with dates, the seventh century prophets.
21. Name, with dates, the prophets of the exile.
22. Name, with dates, the prophets of the postexilic period.
23. What twofold danger threatened Jehovah religion in the eighth century?
24. What truths did the eighth century prophets emphasize?
25. Describe briefly the activity and teaching of the seventh century prophets.
26. Describe briefly the activity of the prophets of the exile.
27. Describe briefly the activity and teaching of the postexilic prophets.

28. State three reasons for the decline and final extinction of Hebrew prophecy.

CHAPTER III

1. Trace the course of political events in Israel from the revolution of Jehu to the accession of Jeroboam II.
2. Point out the important events in Jeroboam's reign.
3. Describe the prosperity and luxury in Israel as portrayed by Amos.
4. Describe moral and social conditions in the days of Amos.
5. What were the religious conditions?
6. Where was Amos born, and what was his occupation?
7. How did his occupation prepare him for the prophetic office?
8. What was the attitude of the priest at Beth-el toward Amos?
9. Is there anything known concerning the later life of Amos?
10. How is the date of Amos determined?
11. Indicate the logical arrangement of the Book of Amos.
12. Give a brief outline of the contents of Amos 1 and 2.
13. Separate the five discourses contained in Amos 3–6, and briefly state the contents of each.
14. Briefly state the contents of Amos 7–9.
15. Explain each of the five visions narrated in Amos 7–9.
16. What aspects of the nature and character of Jehovah were emphasized by Amos?
17. State six truths concerning Israel and its destiny taught by Amos.
18. What are some of the permanent lessons of the Book of Amos?

CHAPTER IV

1. When did Hosea prophesy?
2. Describe political conditions in Israel subsequent to the death of Jeroboam II.
3. Describe moral and religious conditions during the same period.
4. Where was the home of Hosea?
5. How is the narrative concerning Hosea's marriage to be explained?

6. What bearing did Hosea's domestic experience have upon his prophetic activity?
7. Briefly indicate the contents of Hosea 1–3.
8. Give a general idea of the contents of Hosea 4–14.
9. What phases of the nature and character of Jehovah does Hosea emphasize?
10. What does Hosea say concerning Israel, the chosen people of Jehovah?
11. What kind of service does Hosea consider acceptable to Jehovah?
12. What four elements enter into Hosea's teaching concerning the restoration of Israel?
13. State the closing events in the history of the northern kingdom.

CHAPTER V

1. Describe external conditions—political, industrial, commercial—in Judah during the reign of Uzziah.
2. Describe external conditions during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah.
3. Describe moral and social conditions during the same period.
4. What was the attitude of the prophets toward the nobles?
5. Describe religious conditions during the reigns mentioned.
6. Why may Isaiah be called a king among prophets?
7. What is known concerning the personal life, the family, and the death of Isaiah?
8. When did Isaiah prophesy?
9. Give the principal divisions of the Book of Isaiah, and briefly indicate the contents of each division.
10. Indicate the sections of the book that are by many denied to Isaiah or are looked upon with suspicion.
11. Indicate, in chronological order, the different periods to which the prophecies of Isaiah may be assigned.
12. What is the key to Isaiah's activity?
13. What is Isaiah's conception of the divine holiness?
14. What does Isaiah teach concerning the divine majesty?
15. What does Isaiah believe concerning the relation of Jehovah to man?

16. Summarize the truths impressed upon Isaiah during his inaugural vision.
17. How does the influence of this vision manifest itself?
18. Briefly indicate the various interests and activities of Isaiah.
19. What led Isaiah to emphasize the divine majesty?
20. What did Isaiah teach concerning the service acceptable to Jehovah?
21. Describe the activity of Isaiah as a moral and social reformer.
22. What was the fundamental factor in Isaiah's attitude as a statesman?
23. Describe Isaiah's political activity during the Syro-Ephraimitic crisis.
24. State two reasons underlying Isaiah's opposition to the policy of Ahaz.
25. What was Isaiah s conception of faith?
26. What were the results of Ahaz's stubbornness?
27. Describe Isaiah's political activity in 705–701, and point out how his attitude then may be harmonized with that of 734.
28. How did later events justify Isaiah's attitude?
29. What did Isaiah teach concerning the salvation of a emnant?
30. Outline Isaiah's teaching concerning the character of the Messianic era.
31. What does Isaiah say concerning the nature and character of the Messianic king?
32. What does Isaiah say concerning the rule of this king?
33. Why does Isaiah insist so strongly upon the inviolability of Zion?
34. In what respect does Isaiah's activity foreshadow the formation of the church?

CHAPTER VI

1. Institute a comparison between Isaiah and Micah.
2. Where was Micah's home?
3. When did Micah prophesy?

4. Describe the arrangement of the separate utterances in the Book of Micah.
5. Briefly indicate the contents of Mic. 1, 2.
6. Briefly indicate the contents of Mic. 3–5.
7. Briefly indicate the contents of Mic. 6, 7.
8. What does Micah teach concerning the relation of Jehovah to Israel?
9. Why does Micah give such prominent place to the divine judgments?
10. What does Micah say concerning the Messianic king?
11. Indicate the significance of the eighth century prophets.

CHAPTER VII

1. Outline the history of Judah during the century preceding the fall of Jerusalem.
2. What became of the people subsequently to the capture of the city?
3. Describe the invasion of the Scythians.
4. When did the kingdom of Assyria come to an end?
5. Who became the successor of Assyria?
6. Describe religious conditions in Judah during the reigns of Manasseh and Amon, and the early years of Josiah's reign.
7. What event was chiefly responsible for a change in conditions?
8. When did the reforms of Josiah take definite shape?
9. In what year was Josiah slain?
10. What effect did the death of Josiah have upon the reforms instituted by him?
11. Describe moral and social conditions at the time Jeremiah began his prophetic work.
12. Give a brief outline of Jeremiah's personal life.
13. Describe Jeremiah's call to the prophetic office.
14. How does the temperament of Jeremiah manifest itself during his career?
15. Indicate some of the hardships the prophet had to endure.
16. Indicate the bright and noble aspects of Jeremiah's character.
17. Describe various methods employed by Jeremiah.

18. What do we learn from the Book of Jeremiah concerning its composition?
19. Indicate the nine groups of prophecies into which the book may be divided.
20. What is the central theme of Jeremiah's teaching?
21. What does Jeremiah say concerning Jehovah's interest in Israel?
22. What does he say concerning Israel's apostasy?
23. How does he treat the self-righteousness of the people?
24. Outline Jeremiah's threats of judgment.
25. State Jeremiah's view concerning the remnant.
26. What does Jeremiah say concerning a restoration from exile?
27. What does he teach concerning a new Jerusalem?
28. What is his conception of the ideal king of the future?
29. What is his conception of the new covenant?
30. How did Jeremiah spiritualize religion?
31. What does he say concerning individual responsibility?
32. What is his attitude toward the salvation of other nations?
33. What is his attitude toward the externals of religion?

CHAPTER VIII

1. ZEPHANIAH

1. What was the occasion of Zephaniah's prophetic activity?
2. What accusations does Zephaniah bring against Judah and Jerusalem?
3. Enumerate the other nations condemned by Zephaniah.
4. What effects, does he say, will the judgment have upon Judah and the other nations?
5. In what points does the teaching of Zephaniah resemble that of his predecessors?
6. What does Zephaniah say concerning the day of Jehovah?
7. Does Zephaniah consider it necessary for the nations to come to Jerusalem to worship Jehovah?

2. NAHUM

1. When and under what circumstances did Nahum prophesy?
2. Where was the home of Nahum?
3. What is the central theme of Nahum's prophecies?

4. Give a summary of Nahum's description of the destruction of Nineveh.
5. What does Nahum teach concerning the character of Jehovah?
6. Explain Nahum's silence concerning Judah's sins.
7. What prompted Nahum to glory in the doom of Nineveh?
8. State some of the permanent lessons of the Book of Nahum.
9. State the Messianic teaching of Nahum.

3. HABAKKUK

1. How do the utterances of Habakkuk differ from those of his predecessors?
2. Describe moral conditions in Judah at the time of Habakkuk.
3. Describe political conditions.
4. State the twofold perplexity of Habakkuk and the divine solutions.
5. Upon what forms of wrongdoing are the woes in 2. 6–20 pronounced?
6. Briefly indicate the contents of the prayer of Habakkuk.
7. Why may Habakkuk be called a prophet of faith?
8. What two truths are emphasized by Habakkuk?

4. OBADIAH

1. What is the historical background of the prophecy of Obadiah?
2. What evidence is there to show that Edom was hostile to Judah during the closing scenes of Judah's history?
3. When was the prophecy of Obadiah delivered?
4. Summarize the message of Obadiah.
5. What was the twofold purpose of Obadiah?
6. Summarize the teaching of Obadiah.

CHAPTER IX

1. What led to Judah's downfall?
2. Wherein does the fall of Judah differ from that of Israel?
3. When did the two deportations take place?
4. Describe the external conditions of the exiles.
5. Describe the religious and moral conditions of the exiles.

6. What effect did the ministry of Ezekiel have upon the exiles?
7. What two currents of influence may be seen in Ezekiel's character and work?
8. When did Ezekiel receive the call to the prophetic office?
9. What two truths impressed themselves upon him in his inaugural vision?
10. What was Ezekiel's principal work during the years preceding the destruction of Jerusalem?
11. What was his principal task subsequently to that catastrophe?
12. How did the work of Ezekiel differ from that of his predecessors?
13. Describe some of the methods adopted by Ezekiel to make his message more impressive.
14. Indicate the principal divisions of the Book of Ezekiel and state the contents of each division.
15. Describe Ezekiel's inaugural vision.
16. Name the nations against which Ezekiel prophesied.
17. Indicate the significance of Ezekiel in the history of the Jews.
18. On what condition might the divine favor be restored to Judah?
19. Why does Ezekiel announce judgments upon the heathen nations?
20. How will the land be prepared for the reception of the returning exiles?
21. How will the exiles be prepared for the return?
22. Under what figure does the prophet describe the restoration?
23. What does Ezekiel say concerning the Messianic ruler?
24. What is the supreme blessing promised to the exiles?
25. Why and for what purpose did Ezekiel formulate the theocratic constitution in chapters 40–48?
26. What is Ezekiel's conception of the glory of Jehovah?
27. What does Ezekiel mean by the statement that Jehovah does something "for his name's sake"?
28. What does he mean by the statement that Jehovah will "sanctify himself"?

29. What does Ezekiel teach concerning individual responsibility?
30. Wherein does Ezekiel's view of the early history of Israel differ from that of his predecessors?
31. Explain Ezekiel's high estimate of the externals of religion.

CHAPTER X

1. Narrate the events leading to the capture of Babylon by Cyrus.
2. Indicate the historical background of Isa. 40ff.
3. What two explanations are suggested of the fact that these chapters reflect the Babylonian exile?
4. What is the date reflected in these chapters?
5. Indicate the sections into which these chapters may be divided.
6. What is the principal theme of Isa. 40–48?
7. What is the principal theme of Isa. 49–55?
8. Indicate some of the features in chapters 40–48 that are omitted in chapters 49–55.
9. What is the principal theme of Isa. 56–66?
10. What is the essential characteristic of Isa. 40ff.?
11. What was to be the mission of the redeemed Israel?
12. Why was it necessary to emphasize in exile the sole deity of Jehovah?
13. How does the author seek to establish the sole deity of Jehovah?
14. Where does the author find evidences of the divine power and supremacy?
15. For what purpose does the author emphasize the omnipotence of Jehovah?
16. Indicate some of the ways in which, according to the author, the righteousness of Jehovah finds expression.
17. Why does the author use the title "the Holy One of Israel"?
18. What is Jehovah's plan for the nations of the earth?
19. How is the redemptive purpose of Jehovah to be carried out?
20. Indicate the author's thought concerning Israel as the "servant of Jehovah."

21. State Delitzsch's interpretation of the "servant of Jehovah" passages.
22. Who is the "servant of Jehovah" in Isa. 40–53?
23. In what sense does Isa. 53 find its fulfillment in Jesus?
24. Describe the glories of the Messianic age as portrayed in Isa. 40ff.
25. What does the author conceive to be the service acceptable to Jehovah ?

CHAPTER XI

1. When did Haggai and Zechariah prophesy?
2. When did the first return from exile take place?
3. Why did the building operations on the temple soon cease?
4. What important political events took place in Persia after the death of Cyrus?
5. How did the prophets interpret these events?
6. Describe religious and moral conditions in Jerusalem at the time Haggai and Zechariah prophesied.
7. What was the task of the two prophets?
8. Separate the several utterances of Haggai and briefly state the purpose of each.
9. Why did Haggai and Zechariah insist so strongly on the rebuilding of the temple?
10. Give a brief summary of Haggai's teaching.
11. How does the influence of Haggai's one idea show itself in all his teaching?
12. On what does Zechariah base his opening appeal for repentance?
13. What was the purpose of Zechariah's visions?
14. Indicate the eight night visions of Zechariah and briefly state the significance of each.
15. What did the crowning of the high priest signify?
16. Wherein does Zechariah differ from his predecessors?
17. What duties are performed by the angels who appear in Zech. 1–8?
18. Compare Zechariah's estimate of the temple with that of Haggai.
19. What elements enter into the Messianic hope of Zechariah?

20. What are the essential requirements of Jehovah according to Zechariah?
21. Upon what did the success and well-being of the restored exiles depend?
22. Why are Zech. 9–14 denied to the author of Zech. 1–8?
23. What is the probable date of these chapters?
24. Indicate in a general way the contents of these chapters.
25. What promises are held out to the distressed Jews?
26. What will be the destiny of the nations?
27. What is said concerning the Messianic king?
28. Briefly state the parable of the good and the foolish shepherd, and explain its teaching.

CHAPTER XII

1. What is the meaning of the name "Malachi"?
2. Indicate some of the views as to the use of this name in the heading of the Book of Malachi.
3. Give a brief character sketch of the author of the book.
4. When did Malachi prophesy?
5. Outline political events in Western Asia between 516 and 458 B. C.
6. Explain the rise of religious indifference and skepticism in the Jewish community.
7. How did this indifference and skepticism manifest itself?
8. By what line of reasoning did some avoid falling into skepticism?
9. What formed the basis of Malachi's appeals?
10. Why does Malachi condemn mixed marriages and divorce?
11. Why may the Book of Malachi be described as "Prophecy within the Law"?
12. Explain Malachi's high regard for the law.
13. What does Malachi say concerning the relation of Jehovah to the Jews?
14. What led Malachi to emphasize the righteousness of Jehovah?
15. In what sense does Malachi teach the brotherhood of man?
16. How does Malachi estimate the worship of Jehovah among foreign nations?
17. Outline the Messianic teaching of Malachi.

CHAPTER XIII

1. Indicate some of the dates suggested for the Book of Joel.
2. What is the reason for this uncertainty as to the date of Joel?
3. What is the most probable date of Joel?
4. Where did Joel prophesy?
5. What was the occasion of Joel's prophecy?
6. Indicate the principal divisions of the Book of Joel and briefly state the contents of each division.
7. What is the day of Jehovah?
8. What does Joel say concerning the day of Jehovah?
9. What does Joel teach concerning the outpouring of the Divine Spirit?
10. Explain Joel's spirit of exclusiveness.
11. What does Joel say concerning the sovereignty of Jehovah?
12. What was Joel's attitude toward the externals of religion?

CHAPTER XIV

1. JONAH

1. Who is the hero of the Book of Jonah?
2. Outline the experiences of Jonah as narrated in the Book of Jonah.
3. How does the Book of Jonah differ from other prophetic books?
4. What is the purpose and aim of the book?
5. What is the central truth taught in the book?
6. Outline in detail the allegorical interpretation of the book.
7. When was the Book of Jonah written?

2. DANIEL

1. To which division of the Hebrew canon does the Book of Daniel belong?
2. Indicate some of the suggestions made to account for this position.
3. What are the chief characteristics of Jewish apocalyptic literature?
4. When and by whom was the Book of Daniel written according to the traditional view?

5. When and under what circumstances was it written according to the modern view?
6. How do those who accept the later date explain the ascription of the book to Daniel?
7. Narrate Daniel's youth and education.
8. Describe Nebuchadnezzar's image dream and state its significance.
9. Narrate the events leading to the deliverance of Daniel's companions from the fiery furnace.
10. Describe Nebuchadnezzar's tree dream and its fulfillment.
11. Narrate the feast of Belshazzar and the events connected with it.
12. Why was Daniel cast into the lions' den?
13. Describe Daniel's vision of the four beasts and state its interpretation.
14. Describe the vision of the ram and the he-goat and state its significance.
15. What reply did Daniel receive to his prayer for a return of the divine favor?
16. Briefly indicate the contents of the last vision of Daniel.
17. What is the design and purpose of the Book of Daniel?
18. Wherein does Daniel's conception of the ultimate triumph of the kingdom of God differ from that of earlier prophets?
19. Wherein does the angelology of the Book of Daniel mark an advance over earlier teaching?
20. What is the general Old Testament conception of life after death?
21. What contributions does the Book of Daniel make to the doctrine of a resurrection from the dead?
22. Indicate some limitations in the teaching of the Book of Daniel concerning this point.
23. What is the place of prophecy in the working out of the redemptive purpose of God?

INDEX

A

Amos, 35–51; person and life, 38–42; conditions of age, 35–38; message, 42–47; teaching, 47–51.
Angels, 262, 310, 311.
Apocalyptic literature, 299–302.
Assyria, fall of, 129, 130.

B

Bible, definition, 9; etymology of word, 9.

C

Chaldean empire, rise, 130; supremacy in Judah, 126, 127; fall, 222, 223.

D

Daniel, 298–312; literary form, 298–302; date, 300, 301; contents of book, 302–308; teaching, 308–312.
Dates of literary prophets, 29, 30.
Day of Jehovah, 167, 290.
Devotional literature, 15, 16.

E

Egypt, supremacy in Judah, 126.
Elijah and Elisha, 29.
Exile, 186–189; return from, 246, 247.
Ezekiel, 186–221; life and person, 189–194; message, 194–211; teaching, 211–221; significance, 211; emphasis of externals, 220, 221.

F

Faith, 110, 180, 181.
False prophets, 27.

H

Habakkuk, 175–181; peculiarity, 175; message, 176–179; teaching, 179–181; prophet of faith, 179.
Haggai, 246–255; date and conditions, 246–249; message, 250–253; teaching, 253–255.
Historical literature, 16, 17.
Hosea, 52–72; conditions, 52–55; marriage, 56; person and life, 55–57; message, 57–65; teaching, 66–72.

I

Isaiah, 73–115; conditions, 73–77; person and life, 77–80; message, 80–101; vision, 85, 86, 103, 104; work and teaching, 101–115; religious teacher, 104–106; social reformer, 107, 108; statesman, 108–112.
Isaiah, chapters 40–66, 222–245; contents, 225–235; historical background and date, 223–225; teaching, 235–245.
Israel, the servant of Jehovah, 229–231, 236, 241–244.

J

Jehoiakim, religious reaction, 133.

Jehovah, nature and character, 48, 49, 66, 67, 123, 173, 236–241; fatherhood, 284; glory, 217, 240, 241; holiness, 101–103, 173, 218, 240; love, 67, 296; majesty, 102, 105, 180, 237, 238, 270, 292; name, 217; righteousness, 49, 66, 239, 240, 264, 284; sole deity, 236, 237.
Jeremiah, 125–162; conditions, 125–135; life and character, 135–140; message, 140–154; teaching, 154–162.
Joel, 286–292; date, 286, 287; exclusiveness, 291; message, 287–290; teaching, 290–292.
Jonah, 293–298; contents of book, 294, 295; date, 298; interpretation, 297, 298; teaching, 295–297.
Josiah, reforms of, 132.

L

Law, 283.

M

Malachi, 272–285; name, 272; character, 272, 273; conditions and date, 273–279; message, 279–282; teaching, 282–285.
Manasseh, religious reaction, 130.
Messianic age, 51, 69–71, 112, 157–160, 214–217, 244, 245, 309, 310.
Messianic king, 71, 113–115, 124, 159, 214, 270, 271; Zerubbabel, 254, 263.
Micah, 116–124; Isaiah and Micah, 116; person and life, 116–118; message, 118–123; teaching, 123, 124.
Moses, the first prophet, 25.

N

Nahum, 168–174; life and person, 168–170; message, 170–172; teaching, 173, 174.

O

Obadiah, 181–185; message, 184; purpose, 185; teaching, 185.
Old Testament, canon, 11; contents, 10, 11; differences between English and Hebrew, 10; various kinds of literature, 14–17.

P

Priestly literature, 16.
Prophecy, basis and origin, 18, 19; primitive methods, 19–22; among the Hebrews, beginning, 25; history, 25–30; peculiarities, 22.
Prophet, etymology of word, 22; titles, 23; twofold activity, 24; dates, 29, 30; survey of teaching and activity, 30–33; false, 27; prophets and Jesus, 33, 34, 312, 313.
Prophetic literature, 14.

R

Regeneration, 214.
Remnant, 112, 158.
Repentance, 70, 212.
Responsibility, individual, 161, 162, 219.
Resurrection, 311, 312.
Revelation, methods of, 12, 13.

S

Samuel, 26.
Scythians, 129.
Servant of Jehovah, 229–231, 236, 241–244.
Skepticism, 248, 276, 281, 282.
Sons of prophets, 26.
Spirit, outpouring of, 290, 291.
Spirituality of religion, 160.

T

Temple, unique place of, 253–255, 262, 263.

W

Wisdom literature, 14, 15.

Z

Zechariah, 246–271; date and conditions, 246–249; message, 255–261, 265–269; teaching, 261–265, 269–271.
Zephaniah, 163–168; life and person, 163, 164; message, 164–166; teaching, 166–168.

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